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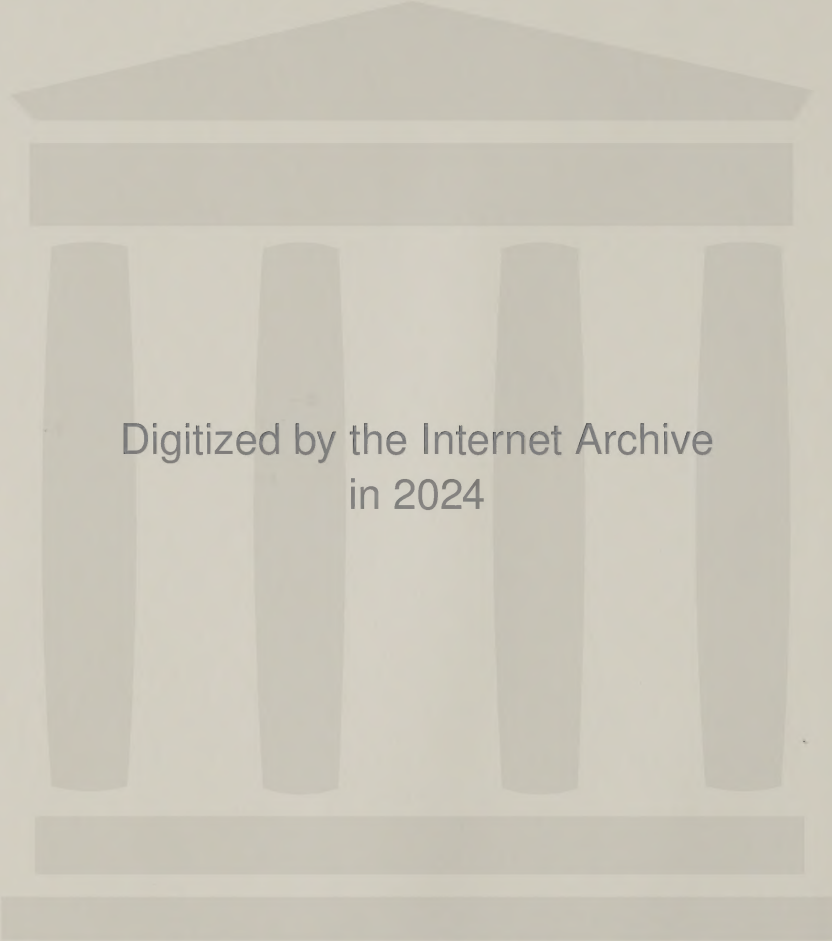
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A brief history of the
Norway Lutheran Church

LUTHERAN
CONGREGATION

1904

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Good News

NORWAY
LUTHERAN
CONGREGATION

Seventy-fifth Anniversary



1874 - 1949

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O praise the Lord, all ye nations;
Praise him, all ye people.
For His merciful kindness is great toward us;
And the truth of the Lord endureth for ever.
Praise ye the Lord.

—Ps. 117



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SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY
1874-1949

Norway
Evangelical Lutheran Church

Minnehaha County, Edison Township
South Dakota

October 2, 1949

E. W. Rossing, Pastor
Garretson, S. Dak.

Program

MORNING WORSHIP—10:30 a. m.

Prelude - - - Mrs. Carl Meier, Pianist

Opening Prayer

Hymn—35

Open now thy gates of beauty,
Zion, let me enter there,
Where my soul in joyful duty,
Waits for Him who answers prayer;
O how blessed is this place,
Filled with solace, light and grace.

Lord, my God, I come before Thee,
Do not hide Thy face from me;
Where we find Thee and adore Thee
There a heaven on earth must be;
To my heart, O enter Thou,
Let it be Thy temple now.

Here Thy praise is gladly chanted,
Here Thy seed is duly sown;
Let my soul, where it is planted,
Bring forth precious sheaves alone,
So that all I hear may be
Fruitful unto life in me.

The Confession of Sin and Kyrie.

The Absolution and Gloria.

The Collect for the Day.

The Lesson: Philippians 1:20-26.

Hymn—1.

Thee God we praise, Thy name we bless
Thee Lord of all we do confess;
The whole creation worships Thee,
The Father of eternity.

To Thee aloud all angels cry,
The heavens and all the powers on high,
The cherubs and the seraphs join,
And thus they hymn Thy praise divine.

O holy, holy, holy Lord,
Thou God of hosts, by all adored;
Earth and the heavens are full of Thee,
Thy light, Thy power, Thy majesty.

The Gospel: John 11:32-45.

The Confession of Faith.

Anniversary Choir, "Seek Ye The Lord."

Sermon: The Rev. A. J. Bergsaker, D. D., Executive
Secretary of The Evangelical Lutheran
Church and former pastor of Norway
Congregation.

Anniversary Choir, "The King of Love My Shepherd Is."

The Collect for the Word.

The Benediction.

Hymn—53

Praise to Thee and adoration,
Blessed Jesus, Son of God,
Who, to serve Thine own creation,
Didst partake of flesh and blood;
Teach me that I never may
From Thy fold or pastures stray,
But with zeal and joy exceeding
Follow where Thy steps are leading.

Let me never, Lord, forsake Thee
E'en though bitter pain and strife
On my way shall overtake me;
But may I through all my life
Walk in fervent love to Thee,
In all woes for comfort flee
To Thy birth, Thy death and passion;
Till I see Thy full salvation.

The Closing Prayer and Lord's Prayer.

Announcements.

Offertory: The congregation will place the offering upon
the altar as it is dismissed.

Dinner served by the Ladies Aid.

AFTERNOON SESSION—2:30 p. m.

Hymn—88

Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God;
He, whose word cannot be broken,
Formed thee for His own abode,
On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose!
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou may'st smile at all thy foes.

See the streams of living waters
Springing from eternal love,
Well supply thy sons and daughters,
And all fear and want remove.
Who can faint while such a river
Ever flows their thirst to assuage?
Grace, which like the Lord, the giver,
Never fails from age to age.

Savior, if of Zion's city
I, through grace, a member am,
Let the world deride or pity,
I will glory in Thy name.
Fading is the worldling's pleasure,
All his boasted pomp and show;
Solid joys and lasting treasure
None but Zion's children know.

Devotion and Greetings, Rev. C. O. Johnson, Oldham, S. D.

Song by the Sunday School, Mrs. Martin Berge, Supt.

Historical Summary, Mr. James O. Berdahl.

Vocal Solo, Miss Betty Severson.

San. 2. H. 1

Greetings:

Rev. John Mason, Brandon Parish and Sioux Falls
Circuit.

Rev. A. J. Evenson, Sherman Parish.

Norway Junior Choir of 1933-1939, Mr. Henry Berdahl, Dir.

Greetings:

Rev. O. M. Odland, Dell Rapids Parish.

Rev. E. L. Bentson, Nidaros Parish.

Rev. Dale Simons, Philip, S. D.

Vocal Solo, Mr. Carl Berdahl.

Address: The Rev. L. A. Pierson, D. D., President of the
South Dakota District of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church.

Hymn—321

Beneath the cross of Jesus I fain would take my stand,
The shadow of a mighty rock Within a weary land;
A home within the wilderness, A rest upon the way,
From the burning of the noon-tide heat, And the burden of the day

Upon the cross of Jesus, Mine eye at times can see
The very dying form of One Who suffered there for me.
And from my smitten heart with tears, These wonders I confess,
The wonder of His glorious love And my own worthlessness.

I take, O cross, thy shadow For my abiding-place;
I ask no other sunshine than The sunshine of His face;
Content to let the world go by, To know no gain or loss,
My sinful self my only shame, My glory all the cross.

Benediction.

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EVENING SESSION—8:00 p. m.

Hymn—117

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

To Him shall endless prayer be made,
And praises throng to crown His head;
His name like sweet perfume shall rise
With every morning sacrifice.

People and realms of every tongue
Dwell on His love with sweetest song;
And infant voices shall proclaim
Their early blessings on His name.

Devotion and Greetings, Rev. M. C. Thompson,
Prairie Farm, Wis.

Vocal Solo, Rev. E. W. Rossing.

Piano Solo, Student Roger Hatlestad, Concordia College.

Male Quartette: Theo. Hatlestad, Julian Berdahl, Carl
Berdahl and Henry Berdahl

Greetings:

Rev. and Mrs. Odean Monson, Petersburg, N. D.

Selections: Rock-Minnehaha Male Chorus,
Mr. T. E. Wangsness, Dir.

Address: The Rev. Selmer Berge, Fargo, N. D.

Selections: Rock-Minnehaha Male Chorus,
Mr. T. E. Wangsness, Dir.

Closing:

Remarks.

Doxology.

Benediction.

Carl Q. H. and

A BRIEF HISTORY
of the
NORWAY LUTHERAN
CONGREGATION

75th Anniversary



1874 - 1949

EDISON TOWNSHIP - MINNEHAHA COUNTY
SOUTH DAKOTA

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SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA

My church! My church! My dear old church!
My fathers' and my own!
'On Prophets and Apostles built,
And Christ the corner stone!
All else beside, by storm or tide,
May yet be overthrown
But not my church, my dear old church,
My fathers' and my own!



"Here stands the font before our eyes
Telling how God did receive us;
Th' altar recalls Christ's sacrifice
And what His table doth give us;
Here sounds the word that doth proclaim
Christ yesterday, today the same,
Yea, and for aye our Redeemer."





Rev. and Mrs. E. W. Rossing
Eunice, Ronald, Lyle and William

When men look up into the face of their Heavenly Father and humbly acknowledge His grace, then there is awareness of H's Goodness and Mercy which makes the heart rejoice and be glad. To be sure, God is always Good; and our God is the God of Mercy forever. But the significant thing is that we are aware of it in the realization of the goodness and mercy which He has bestowed upon us.

Today we do not rejoice simply in the fact that Norway congregation is seventy-five years old, and that the anniversary is being observed with a fitting celebration. We are rejoicing, rather, in what the Lord has done for the members of Norway congregation, and **through** the members of Norway congregation these past seventy-five years.

We are rejoicing and glad of heart today because we realize that here at Norway church the Lord has given us our spiritual home. He blessed the labors of our fathers so that the congregation was established. Here many were brought to the Lord in Holy Baptism. Here they received their instruction in the Word of God, and here they were confirmed. Here many have shared the fellowship and presence of the Blessed Savior in Word and Sacrament. Here many have plighted their love and troth in Holy Wedlock. From here many have been brought to their last resting place. Rich in these memories is this present hour when we humbly and gratefully acknowledge the Goodness and Mercy of God which blessed our forebearers along their way, and blesses ours today. Thanks be to God for the labors of His Love through the mighty workings of the Holy Spirit whereby he has "translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son." Col. 1:13. With Jacob of old we shall

surely say, "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven". Genesis 28:17.

We are rejoicing and glad of heart today because we know that the Lord has done something **through** Norway congregation for His Kingdom here on earth amongst men. You have only to glance at the histories of the congregation and its societies to be face to face with the aims and purposes which have given life, and worth, and meaning to their existence. The causes of Mission, Christian Education and Charities have ever been vital to the interests of her membership. There has been a fine sense of responsibility and stewardship with deep loyalties to the Church and its work at large which has its roots in love to Christ and obedience to His command: "Go ye therefore, make disciples of all nations . . ." Matt. 28:19.

As the Lord has been permitted to use us and work His works **through** us, our appreciation of the meaning of the Kingdom has deepened. We have been challenged not only with its implications from the standpoint of extending it abroad, but with its meaning for us at home.

"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom". Luke 12:32. That's what God has given us!—The Kingdom! We are "translated into the Kingdom of His dear Son"! We not only have the Kingdom; but we are the Kingdom. Here no man will dare to boast. It is humbling to realize that God is using us, and working through us, as through our fathers before us—each faithful soul an integral part of His Kingdom. But we can see His handiwork: A Christian community, faithful husbands and wives in the homes, loving and obedient children, good neighbors, trusted friends and the like—in short, all that Martin Luther included in his explanation of the meaning of "daily bread" in the fourth petition of the Lord's Prayer.

Because we realize that we are sinful and that we have fallen so far short in meeting the ultimate challenge of the Kingdom, God's great blessings and mighty works are often obscure to us. We can better contemplate the works of God here at home through Norway congregation—through the Kingdom that we are—if we will but close our eyes and think for a moment what it would have meant to me and my neighborhood if God had never touched us through His Church. The thought of the absence of His good through church, family, friend and neighbor will help us to better appreciate the mighty works of His Goodness and Mercy so richly bestowed upon us through the Kingdom.

This is the day the Lord hath made.

We gather at His call

And from His hand the living bread

We take and hear the blessing said

That giveth peace to all.

This is the day the Lord hath made,

And the Lord of love is He.

Oh, may our hearts and lips and hands

Leap to fulfill His love's demands

And true disciples be!

This is the day the Lord hath made

And in His mercy given.

Oh, for this day and for all days

We lift our hearts in humble praise

Unto the Lord of Heaven.

—G. J. Neumann

E. W. Rossing, Pastor

THE PASTORS WHO HAVE SERVED NORWAY LUTHERAN CONGREGATION.

The committee in charge of the preparation of this booklet is happy that it can bring to the congregation greetings from each of the pastors, now living, who have served it, and from some member of the family of each of those who have passed on. On behalf of the congregation, it expresses sincere appreciation for the kind words.

The committee regrets that it was unable to secure a picture of Mrs. Kleven or of the Kleven family.



Rev. and Mrs. H. Z. Hvid

(Picture taken for their fiftieth wedding anniversary celebration)

SOWERS OF ETERNAL SEEDS

When the first settlers came to the Dakota prairies, they had much to give. With their strong arms they tilled the soil, nor did their stout hearts desist when drought robbed them of their first harvests. What was more than all this, they had what they knew would bless their efforts in establishing homes in the New World—faith in an eternal God.

Their homes were hardly built and their seed sown when they founded a congregation and called a pastor to direct their sowing for the heavenly kingdom. As a daughter of this first pastor of the "Norway Lutheran Congregation," I send you greetings and rejoice with you in your seventy-fifth anniversary.

I can recall my father speaking of his work here, of his long drives with horse and light wagon, of a blizzard in which everyone thought he had perished. But these were merely passing words. My father liked to dwell on the eagerness of the people to hear God's Word, of their willingness to give of their little to further His kingdom. "Sowers of eternal seeds," my father called his parishioners of the Norway Lutheran Congregation. Let us thank God for the courage and the faith of these early sowers.

We can take occasion on this day to gather courage in the stability of God's promises. God has said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Is not the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Norway Lutheran Congregation a proof of this promise? May this congregation continue to produce sowers of eternal seeds for the blessing of future generations and the glory of God.

Greetings in Christ,

Lillian Hvid Running
(daughter of Rev. H. Z. Hvid)



Rev. A. N. Kleven

Norway Lutheran Church,
Garretson, South Dakota

Dear Friends:

Permit me to extend to the congregation most sincere and hearty congratulations on the occasion of its 75th Anniversary.

Although I have had no personal contact with your church, I can assure you that Norway Lutheran congregation has a very definite place in the heart of the Kleven family.

Although father and mother shared the difficulties and burdens of that remote pioneer period, yet I remember them as often speaking of the happiness of those days. They were the recipients of so much kindness and love.

My father was the second pastor in the congregation and as his son, I wish now to bring these greetings from our family to you on the occasion of the 75th anniversary.

By the grace of God, we know that Norway Lutheran Church has been instrumental in bringing the message of salvation to many hearts. May our Heavenly Father continue to keep you in His love for Jesus' sake.

Sincerely,
Nils Kleven



Rev. H. O. Opsal and Family

In memory of my beloved parents, the Reverend Hans Olson Opsal and Anna Christina Christopherson, may I, together with my brothers and sisters, extend sincere greetings and congratulations to the pastor, members and friends of Norway Lutheran Congregation as they now observe the Diamond Anniversary. On this great occasion there are no doubt assembled here children of many of those hardy pioneers who helped to found this house of worship. My mother and father came here as bride and groom—it was father's first call. As a child I often heard mother speak of her experiences here in this locality, and of the many kind and loyal friends. Her one discomfort, as I recall, seemed to be the "team of wild horses", which Father drove, especially when they forded the river. Mother was a guest at the Golden Anniversary celebration, from which she derived much blessing and enjoyment. She had a very busy time visiting old friends, and especially the Berdahl families, many of whom were members of Father's church. May the Seventy-fifth Anniversary festival bring rich blessings to the members, friends and visitors, and may God continue to bless the Congregation and her members. It seems very fitting at this time to quote a verse from my Mother's favorite hymn, which she so often played on the organ and sang:

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love,
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to That above."

Josephine D. Opsal



Rev. E. H. Midtbo and Family

During the time my father served Norway Lutheran Congregation and the other congregations of the parish of which it was a part, he made his appointments with horses and buggy or sleigh—quite different roads then than now.

From my mother's list of names of friends with whom she visited and with whom she corresponded after the family moved from Dell Rapids, I find these names of people in that parish: Mrs. Dieson, Mrs. Estensen, Mrs. P. L. Hatlestad, Mrs. H. J. Berdahl, Mrs. O. J. Berdahl, Mrs. Ole Stalheim, Mrs. Sam Dokken, Mrs. H. Loftness, Mrs. E. J. Berdahl, Mrs. Brita Loftness, Mrs. Nels Arnston.

My father died in 1911 and mother in 1924.

I was born in Dell Rapids, July 29, 1838. From 1910 to 1934, I served, off and on, through Sioux Falls on the C., St. P., M. & Omaha Railroad, for six years as fireman and eighteen years as locomotive engineer until a broken steam pipe ended my railroad career.

With the memory of a pleasant parish in which to serve, as related by father and mother, I greet you on your seventy-fifth anniversary.

Olaf T. Midtbo



Rev. C. C. Moe and Family

To Norway Lutheran Congregation on this your 75th Anniversary:

As spokesman for the four surviving children of one of your former pastors, namely Rev. Christian C. Moe, I wish to bring you a greeting: From 1st Corinthians, 15th chapter, verses 1 to 5. "Moreover brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received and wherein ye stand; by which ye are also saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you. Unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. And that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." This was the message our Dear Father tried to impress on you the years God gave him grace to serve you and your forefathers as your shepherd of souls. May God bless the memory of the pioneers who founded this congregation and may He also bless you who are continuing the work for His Kingdom!

Mrs. Harry (Mable) Halvorson
Dell Rapids, South Dakota

Miss Stella Moe
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dr. Leonard Moe
Jacksonville, Florida

By: C. Martin Moe
Minneapolis, Minnesota



Rev. and Mrs. A. J. Bergsaker

To the Pastor and Members of the
Norway Lutheran Congregation
Garretson, South Dakota

Dear Friends:

The Evangelical Lutheran Church extends its best wishes and congratulations to Norway Lutheran Congregation and its pastor on its seventy-fifth anniversary. This is indeed a signal occasion and I am sure you feel constrained to say with the Psalmist: "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." It is a day of rejoicing and thanksgiving!

Your anniversary affords a special opportunity to remember before the Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ, those evidences of his mercy and care which in part arise before your minds in retelling the story of the founding and the growth of the congregation. This act will help to arouse cherished memories among the older members, deepen and enrich the understanding of how it came about that congregation is here today, and stir in all of you gratitude to God for the spiritual home and communion He has provided and kept. This account should be a memorial of esteem in honor of those whose loyalty and sacrifice in the early days, by the grace of God, led to the establishing of Norway Lutheran Church.

What a blessing it is to have had a Christian congregation in your midst all these years! What an asset it has been to the community! Who can count

the heavenly blessings that have come to the thousands of worshippers during this long time?

"Even thine altars, O Lord of Hosts." For seventy-five years God's altar has stood in your midst. It has been a sweet and blessed place. When the church bells called you thither, there came a feeling akin to that of the Psalmist, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord." At His altar memory has recorded many blessed moments. No matter what the mood, no matter what the need, no matter what the hour, your souls were hallowed as you knelt before your God.

For seventy-five years you not only have been the recipients of God's boundless mercy and blessing, but you have also had the privilege of bringing these blessings to your fellowmen, even to the uttermost parts of the earth. You not only have accepted His gracious invitation to come to Him to receive the forgiveness of sins, in Christian Education, in Home and Foreign Missions, and in Charities and Pensions.

This is indeed an outstanding event in the history of your congregation. The Evangelical Lutheran Church wishes to express its sincere gratitude to you for your love and loyalty to her work and institutions, and prays that God's richest blessings may be yours in the long future to come.

May your seventy-fifth anniversary be a great source of joy and inspiration for future work and service.

With kindest greetings, I am

Yours sincerely,

A. J. Bergsaker

General Secretary

The Evangelical Lutheran Church



Rev. and Mrs. B. J. Rothnem

Great God, who gave our fathers
These fertile plains to gain,
We thank Thee that their labours,
Their faith was not in vain.
Good homes and well tilled acres,
For future years to share,
Speak praises to their honor,
And to Thy loving care.

But fairest of memorials,
Most sacred and sublime,
To Thee and to the faithful
Who served Thee in their time,
Is this Thine house, O Father,
That loving hands did rear;
Now hallowed with remembrance
Of all who worshipped here.

Here Thou hast met Thy people
With word of saving truth,
Enriched baptismal waters,
Made covenant with youth;

In marriage rite at altar,
In sacramental grace,
Above the somber casket,
We saw our Savior's face.

Be Thou for ever with us,
O Thou, our fathers' God,
To keep us true, and guide us
With shepherd staff and rod.
May Thou, too, rear within us
A temple to thy praise;
That we may daily meet Thee
And glad hosannas raise.

Here stand we now united
In faith and hope and love,
Within thine house, O Father,
One with the church above.
With praise for former mercies,
With faith for years to come,
We shall go on rejoicing
To our eternal home.

—B. J. Rothnem



Rev. and Mrs. T. A. Mason

Sincere congratulations to Norway Lutheran Congregations!

I am happy to send a few words of greeting for the 75th anniversary of your organization.

It is a great honor to have kept faith all these years. You as an organization can truthfully feel you have done your utmost to have a Christian congregation in every possible way.

If Rev. Mason could have been here now, he would have expressed what I am trying to say in words you would love to hear. He worked in your congregation almost twenty years. They were good years.

I easily recall the first service I attended in your church.

I know the Lord will continue to bless you as a congregation and individually as long as you keep faith.

Very sincerely,

Mrs. T. A. Mason



Rev. H. D. Halvorsen and Family

"God's Word is our great heritage,
And shall be ours forever.
To spread its light from age to age,
Shall be our chief endeavor.

Through life it guides our way,
In death it is our stay.
Lord grant, while worlds endure,
We keep its teachings pure
Throughout all generations."

This verse can be applied to people who were members of Norway Lutheran Congregation seventy-five years ago, as well as members of today.

Most of the original members had come from Norway when it was required of all children to obtain religious instruction as well as, together with their parents, to attend church services regularly.

Being mindful of the Norwegian church activities and thinking of the future welfare of themselves and children, they did not fail to remember:

"God's Word is our great heritage,
And shall be ours forever.
To spread its light from age to age,
Shall be our great endeavor."

And so—to begin with, one of the first things a few families did, was to call a meeting where it was decided to organize a congregation, and named it Norway Lutheran Congregation.

They realized that the greatest happiness of life is to be able to say with full assurance, "I am a child of God!"

If you are a child of God, you will understand better how important it is that others also may become God's children as well. Above all, you then will understand how essential it is that your own children may be encouraged and trained to remain children of God.

Sincerely,
H. D. Halvorsen

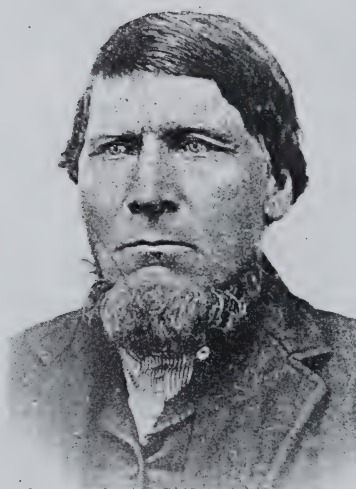
CHARTER MEMBERS

We present here those who were present at the organization meeting, March 23, 1874, each with his wife. We should explain that Anfin J. Berdahl, C. O. Henjum, Elling Larson Kirkebo and C. H. Wangsness were not married at that time, so the wife of each of them cannot be said to have been a charter member. However, Mrs. C. H. Wangsness was a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Johannes Loftesness and became a member of the congregation with that family.

No pictures are available of Mrs. Olaus Jenson, Mrs. Thor Hermanson or Mrs. Iver Ellefson.



Mr. and Mrs. Lasse Bothun



Mr. and Mrs. Johannes E. Berdahl



Mr. and Mrs. Lasse Vadheim



Mr. and Mrs. Herman Wangsness



Mr. and Mrs. Johannes Lottesness



Mr. Thor Hermanson



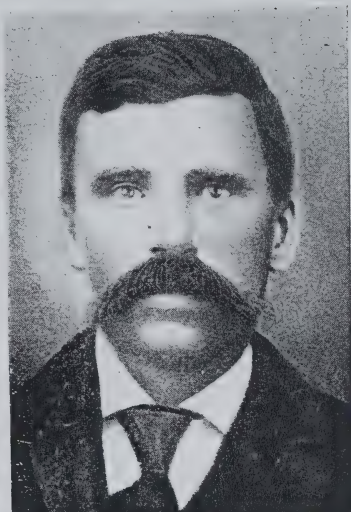
Mr. Olaus Jenson



Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Berdahl



Mr. and Mrs. Ole J. Njos



Mr. and Mrs. Ole Nesheim



Mr. and Mrs. Jens E. Johnson



Mr. and Mrs. David Anderson



Mr. and Mrs. Rognald Bentson



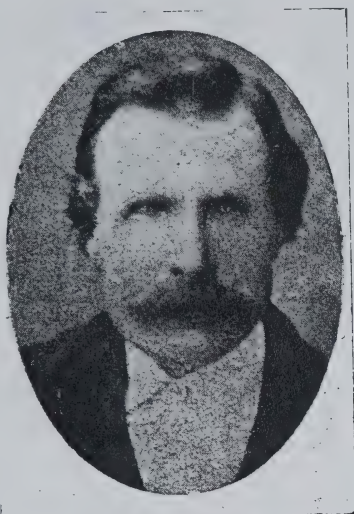
Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Wangsness



Mr. and Mrs. Anfin J. Berdahl



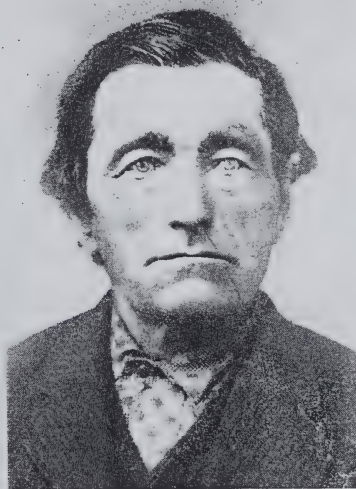
Mr. Albert Brandvold



Mr. and Mrs. Elling Larsson Kirkebo



Mr. and Mrs. C. O. Henjum



Mr. Iver Ellefson



Parish Parsonage, Garretson, South Dakota

OFFICERS, 1949

President	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Rev. E. W. Rossing
Vice President	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Julian H. Berdahl
Secretary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Eric Hermanson
Treasurer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Iver J. Henjum
Sunday School Superintendent	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Martin Berge
Organist	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Carl Meier
Board of Deacons	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Edward Fuglsby, Theodore Hatlestad, Joseph Nesheim
Board of Trustees	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Gilbert Kringen, Leonard Nelson, Carl Meier
Custodian	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Edward Hermanson

* * *

It is due Edward Hermanson to publicly acknowledge his faithful and efficient service as custodian of the church over a period of many years.

A BRIEF HISTORY of NORWAY LUTHERAN CONGREGATION

On the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary celebration of this congregation, the committee which prepared the history for its program commenced with these words:

"At both the twenty-fifth and the fiftieth anniversary celebrations, the program commenced with the reading of the 105th Psalm; and at our sixtieth anniversary, we surely have as good reason to join with the psalmist, David, when he says:

'O give thanks unto the Lord;
call upon his name, make known
his deeds among the people.
Sing unto him, sing psalms unto
him; talk ye of all his wondrous
works.'

"Thus the psalmist, David admonished and exhorted the Israelites to thank and love the Lord for all his blessings. And when we take a look back over the sixty years since the organization of this congregation, we surely have reason to thank the Lord and sing praises to his name for his gracious love and wondrous work among us during all these years."

Not only did the programs commence with the reading of that psalm but the history prepared for and read at each of those celebrations commenced by quoting these words from the psalmist, David.

Now, after another fifteen years, all the more it should be emphasized, "We surely have reason to thank the Lord and sing praises to his name for his gracious love and wondrous work among us during all these years."

For the fiftieth anniversary celebration, a committee, of which charter members were a part, prepared an excellent history of the congregation which was read at one of the programs on that occasion.

In the preparation of this history, the committee has made liberal use of the manuscript of that committee using



Picture of Rev. Hvid by the church on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary celebration of Norway Lutheran Congregation, June 15, 1924.

some of the material verbatim and other parts for reference to necessary data.

In the spring of 1872 this territory was a wild and unoccupied prairie, not a house to be seen after leaving Rock River in Rock county, Minnesota, until reaching the Big Sioux river in Minnehaha county, Dakota Territory, a distance of thirty miles. A few huts were to be seen along these rivers.

That spring the first of those who later became charter members of Norway Congregation came here. They were Lasse Bothun, Johannes Berdahl and his son, Erick. Johannes Berdahl's son, Andrew, and Lars Brandvold also were in this party; but Andrew Ber-

dahl spent the winter of '73-'74 in Minnesota, so was not at the organization meeting. Lars Brandvold died during the winter before the group moved out here.

These men started out from Fillmore county, Minnesota, with the purpose not only of finding a place for homes for themselves, but of finding a place where there would be room for relatives and friends who, they knew, were anxious to find a place to which to move in order to get homes which they could call their own. This large, unoccupied territory seemed to be such a place. Each of them took a homestead along a little stream already then named Slipup Creek, approximately fifteen miles northeast from Sioux Falls and four to five miles east of the Big Sioux river. The banks of this river was the source of material for fuel and for the poles necessary to hold up the roofs of the sod houses or dug-outs which were the first dwelling houses.

After breaking a few acres on each claim, the members of the party returned to their homes in Minnesota to garner their crops and to make preparations for the final move with their families.

Lasse Bothun, with his family, returned that same fall. His brother-in-law, Ole Nesheim, with his family and mother-in-law, also moved here that fall. He came from near Vermillion in Clay county, Dakota Territory, where he first had settled. Iver Ellefson also came over from near Vermillion and filed on land by the Pipestone creek, about six miles farther east, to which place he brought his family the following spring. With Iver Ellefson were his son, Ellef, and daughter Sigri (later Mrs. Ole Stalheim), and Ellef E. Ellefson, all of whom homesteaded in the same vicinity.

It was in the spring and summer of 1873 that most of those who became the organizers of this congregation came to this part of Minnehaha county. The news spread quickly that fertile land was to be had here. The westward movement then was at its peak; and

the land was settled in short order.

With the Berdahl family came Ingeborg Brandvold, widow of Lars Brandvold, and her son, Albert. In the same company were Johannes Loftness and Christopher O. Henjum, a single man. Also in the same company, but coming from Winneshiek county, Iowa, were Herman Wangsness and Thor Hermanson with their families. Others who came later that summer were: Jens Johnson, Torbjorn Olson, Rognald Benson, each with his family, David Anderson and wife, and Elling and Sivert Larson Kirkebo, so that during the year much of the land between the Slipup and Pipestone creeks was taken, and beginning was made for a large Norwegian settlement.

Although the summer season was well along, many people of all ages were here on the open prairie without other shelter than the covered wagons. None complained, however. That there was anything to fear did not occur to any one. All placed their confidence in the Lord Who had guided them to this territory. That confidence was not in vain; and we have reason to rejoice on this anniversary day and to thank the Lord and sing praises to His name.

Before building of houses could be commenced, some breaking had to be done on each place in order to provide a little grain from which to live the next year. Hay had to be gathered to tide the livestock through the winter. During that time the covered wagon had to be used as the family home. But building finally got started and quickly was completed, for a spirit of helpfulness prevailed even among those who theretofore had been total strangers. Neighborliness and mutual helpfulness were necessary traits of the pioneers. These traits seemingly become scarcer as people become more affluent.

The huts did not have a very stylish appearance. They either were dug-outs in some side hills or were made of sod, the only material of wood being the crotches and poles for rafters on which willow brush or limbs of trees were laid. This was covered with hay,

then sod, on top of that a dressing of clay and the roof was complete. Each hut had a door made of cheap material and one single window; a very few



Ruins of a typical Dakota sod house

had two windows, but such instances were unusual. With this the house was ready for occupation and each family had a place in which to live before cold weather set in. All were glad that they had homes which now they could call their own.

The buildings for the stock were of the same material, except that the luxury of windows was not used.

Being sixty miles from railroad—the nearest railroad station was Worthington, Minnesota—nothing but the most essential articles could be used.

When the busy season was at an end and the people had provided houses for themselves and their stock, they commenced to feel the loss of the Sunday services to which they had been accustomed in their former homes. We can imagine, then, their joyful anticipation when notice reached them that a pastor had arrived in the settlement and would conduct divine services. This pastor was the Rev. O. O. Sando of the Norwegian Synod who had been called to serve Nidaros Congregation, a congregation of pioneers along the Big Sioux river which had been organized in 1868, and had been served temporarily by Rev. Christensen of Vermillion until Rev. Sando, on October 22, 1873, was installed as its pastor. Although the services were held on a week day and a severe windstorm raged, every one

who had received notice was present. The information is that this was Rev. Sando's first service in Dakota Territory as it was held prior to his installation in Nidaros Congregation.

Thereafter Rev. Sando conducted several services for this group. But the people could not agree to extend a regular call to him; and he saw fit not to accept the call extended to him to serve temporarily.

A number of the settlers met to discuss what could be done to get a pastor and, at a meeting on January 28, 1874, it was agreed that a letter should be sent to Rev. Olson, the president of the Lutheran Conference to ask if that organization could send a pastor to assist in organizing the congregation. This letter was signed by the following: Lasse Bothun, Johannes Berdahl, Herman Wangness. Ole Njos, Johannes Loftness, Olaus Jenson, Ole Nesheim, Erick Berdahl, Albert Brandvold, Anfin Berdahl, C. H. Wangness, Thor Hermanson, and Christopher O. Henjum.

On March 5, 1874, an answer was received from President Olson that Rev. L. Lund contemplated taking a missionary trip out west and probably would reach here about March 22. He gained a day and came on the 21st. He was accompanied by Rev. Hvid who was serving as pastor in Rock and Nobles counties in Minnesota, a distance of twenty to thirty miles east from here. There was no way of assisting them on that journey because, as already stated, the nearest railroad station was sixty miles away. There were no public highways on which to travel, no bridges across the streams; and at that time of the year it was difficult to get through with horses because the ice had started to break up in places. The snow had melted and raised the water in the streams, so it was quite an undertaking to make such a trip. But none of these obstacles could stop those two sturdy, pioneer pastors from making the attempt to get here on time. They got one of the Rock county pioneers with a team of horses to take them through; and coming by Luverne they bought a long rope to use in case

of emergency. All went well until they reached Split Rock river. There the driver found it would be too much of a risk to attempt to cross with the horses as the water had risen very high. Now the rope came into play. A pond close by where there was no current was examined. The men found the ice still floating on top. One tied the rope around his body, then went out on the ice to test it while the other held fast to the other end ready to lift him out if he should break through. Both crossed safely, said goodbye to the driver who went home, and then proceeded on foot for eight or nine miles until they reached this settlement. This is only one example of the many hardships that our pioneer pastors had to go through in commencing their work on the frontiers.

Divine services were held the next day at Lasse Bothun's home. On March 23, 1874, the organization meeting was held at the same place with a very good attendance. The two pastors, Hvid and Lund, quickly gained the confidence of the people who, under the leadership of Rev. Lund, proceeded to organize, adopting the name, Norway Evangelical Lutheran Congregation. (The name as it appears in the original constitution is: Norsk ev. luth Norway Menighed i Minnehaha Co. Dakota Territory.) A constitution was adopted and signed by the following: Iver Ellefson, L. A. Vadheim, Elling Larson Kirkebo, David Anderson, Rognald Bentson, Jens E. Johnson, Lasse Bothun, Johannes E. Berdahl, Herman H. Wangsness, Ole O. Njos, Johannes H. Loftness, Olaus Jensen, Ole J. Nesheim, Erick J. Berdahl, Albert Brandvold, Anfin Berdahl, C. H. Wangsness, Thor Hermanson, and C. O. Henjum. Officers elected were: Herman Wangsness, Jens E. Johnson and Rognald Bentson, as trustees; Johannes Loftness and Iver Ellefson, as deacons; Erick Berdahl, secretary; and L. A. Vadheim, precentor and treasurer. Rev. Hvid was called as pastor. He accepted with the understanding that he was to give all the service that could

be spared from the large field already served by him.

At the first meeting following the organization — October 23, 1874, — Andrew Berdahl and wife and Erick Iversen joined the congregation. These were the first additions to the new organization.

Although already having a very large field of work, Rev. Hvid, imbued with a missionary spirit, expanded his field by organizing another congregation about fifteen miles farther west known as the Willow Creek congregation.

The call to Rev. Hvid was only temporary and, at the annual meeting in 1876 he was released; and Rev. A. N. Kleven was called to serve this congregation, Willow Creek, and two small congregations near Swan Lake in Turner county, Dakota. He commenced his work that same fall. It was decided that he should live at Swan Lake where he was needed the most for missionary work; but that part of the country was very sparsely settled, and the ravages of the grasshoppers over a period of years made it difficult for the people to pay him enough to enable him to exist and provide for his family. After two years of hard work and poor pay, it was realized that a parish spread over such a large territory could not continue; and, on receiving a call from near Litchfield, Minnesota, he resigned in the fall of 1878.

That fall this congregation and Willow Creek formed a parish, but with the intention that the pastor should do some missionary work to the north where no church organizations had been formed. Rev. H. O. Opsal was called and took charge of the pastorate shortly after Rev. Kleven resigned.

The parish and the congregations constituting it were in their infancy. The grasshoppers had done a great deal of damage to crops for three years in succession, so there was not much inducement from a financial standpoint. The sod houses still were in use; and in these the services had to be conducted. But Rev. Opsal went about

his work in earnest. He organized a congregation in Moody county which he served, and one in Sioux Falls in which place he made his home. He continued in this parish until the summer of 1881 when he resigned to take charge of a parish at Beloit, Wisconsin. In his three years of work here the congregation grew very materially in numbers and extended through Highland township to the Minnesota state line which, in that ox-team age with its poor roads, made it difficult to get together in one place for worship. In 1881 those to the east withdrew and organized Landstad congregation.

It has been said of Rev. Opsal that he was a powerful singer, and his voice could be heard for long distances over the open prairie as he sang familiar hymns while driving about from place to place in the work of his ministry.

By this time the economic conditions had improved very materially. The grasshoppers had disappeared. A railroad had been built to Sioux Falls. Some frame school houses had been built, and church services were held in these instead of in the private homes. But even the school houses soon became too small and, in the spring of 1879, a temporary "lean-to" to the granary at the Johan Hermanson home was erected and used during the summers until 1886 when the new church was taken into use.

In 1881 this congregation, Willow Creek, Sioux Falls, and Landstad congregations extended a call to Rev. E. H. Midtbo which was accepted in the late summer of that year. Although Sioux Falls was a part of his parish, it was felt that Dell Rapids was more nearly in the center of his activities especially in view of the fact that he would be doing some missionary work in the counties to the north, so arrangements were made that he live there.

For some years the "lean-to" had to be used; but need for a church became more and more evident. In 1883 a tract containing two acres, the present site of the church and cemetery, was donated to the congregation for such

use by Thor and Johan Hermanson.

Already in the fall of 1874 the congregation acquired a tract of land in the southeast corner of section four in Edison township, 20 rods long by 16 rods wide, for cemetery purposes. This was a part of Albert Brandvold's tree claim; and he donated the one half of the tract with the understanding that the congregation was to pay for the half at prevailing prices of land when he should be in position to furnish title. However, this tract proved to be unsuitable because it was low and wet. When the new site was acquired, those already interred therein were removed to the new cemetery.

At a meeting held February 1, 1886—an adjourned session of the regular annual meeting of November 21, 1885—there was a great deal of discussion as to the possibility of erecting a church the coming fall. According to the minutes, the discussion showed such great interest in securing a church and promises of contributions that a committee consisting of Erick J. Berdahl, Anfin J. Berdahl, Knut Henjum and C. H. Wangsness was elected to solicit subscriptions. The minutes of this meeting end with the statement that C. H. Wangsness was delegated to go to Sioux Falls and Anfin J. Berdahl to Dell Rapids; the record does not show for what purpose. But from subsequent reports, it is evident that it was for the purpose of soliciting subscriptions to the building fund.

According to the records, the next meeting of the congregation was held May 1, 1886. At that time the committee reported that it had received pledges to the building fund to the amount of \$1,443.00, of which \$35.00 had been paid. It was then decided that the foundation for the church should be built before harvest; that it should be three feet under ground and one foot above at the shallowest point; (at the following meeting this was changed to one foot under ground and one foot above ground;) that it should be two feet thick from bottom to top; that the dirt removed to make place for the foundation should be deposited inside the

foundation. It further was decided that the frame should be fastened to the foundation with iron rods of suitable strength and in sufficient number. The building committee was given the responsibility of deciding upon the necessary supporting foundations within the outer foundation.

As to the church proper, it was decided that it should be 48 x 32 x 16; that a tower should be built, its foundation to be 12 x 12; and that there should be a suitably large gallery the entire width of the church over the entrance door. It was left to the building committee to consult with the contractor as to building material in general and the exterior finish. A building committee was elected. It consisted of E. J. Berdahl, who was named as chairman, K. Henjum, J. Hermanson, L. Nesheim, and C. H. Wangsness. Nils Henjum was elected as treasurer of the building fund and was directed not to pay out money to anyone except on order from the chairman of the building committee.

At the next meeting, which was held June 5th, it was decided that a chancel 16 x 20 was to be built, its height and shape to be determined by the building committee and the contractor in charge of construction. The record of this meeting shows that a number of drawings of the proposed church was shown, but that no action was taken as to whether or not building was to be done that fall. That was to be decided at a meeting to be held immediately after harvest.

The proposed meeting following harvest was held August 8. At that meeting E. J. Berdahl moved that the church be built this fall. This motion was seconded by C. H. Wangsness. In support of his motion, Mr. Berdahl stated that the crop was reasonably good, and that the members of the congregation were as able as the people of the neighboring congregation to undertake the building of a church. C. H. Wangsness, supporting the motion, called attention to the fact that a pledge of \$15.00 worth of nails and paint and other pledges of \$125.00 had been received from people in Sioux Falls. He

stated that if no building were commenced this fall, he would refuse to have anything to do with a Sioux Falls subscription list. The record recites that several argued against building at this time. They called attention to the fact that crops were not good and that prices were low. One suggested that the church could not be completed so that it could be used during the winter, and that if school houses could not be secured in which to conduct services, perhaps arrangements could be made with the neighboring Synod congregation to rent its church for services. According to the minutes, this suggestion did not meet with favor. The secretary records that it met with laughter and ridicule from some quarters while it was being explained that, in as much as the members of the Synod congregation had refused to join with the members of this congregation in the building of a church, it did not seem proper to use their church even if it could be secured which seemed doubtful. The motion to build then was put to a vote. Seventeen voted in favor of the motion and two against.

Although not fully completed, the church was taken into use late that fall.

At a meeting of the congregation held February 1, 1887, it was decided to line the church with brick as soon as weather in the spring would permit the work to be done. At the same time the trustees were directed to have the church insured for its full value of \$2,000 in a "reliable American insurance company" against fire, lightning, and storm. At the following meeting in May, Thor Hermanson agreed to provide a fire brake fifty feet wide around the church.

On February 4, 1889, the building committee reported to the congregation that the necessary material to complete the church could be secured on credit until fall. It thereupon was voted that the entire church should be plastered ("at der skal vaere plastering alt over,") and mopboards provided; that all the material shall be on the premises "two weeks from today;" that Halvor Dybe-



Norway Lutheran Church at time of its dedication, May 18, 1890

"How fair the Church of Christ shall stand
A beacon light in all the land."

Except for those who had a part in the building of the church, perhaps none cherish it more than those who, as children, received their religious instruction in it from the teachers and pastors of the congregation—who, in confirmation, reaffirmed their baptismal vows at its altar—yes, and who have brought loved ones into it for the last sacred rites before the remains were laid away to await the hour "in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice"; but we would remind ourselves that, while it is proper to cherish the church, there is no salvation in wood and stone and mortar, but—

"Christ alone is our salvation,
Christ, the rock on which we stand;
Other than this sure foundation
Will be found but sinking sand.
Christ, His cross and resurrection,
Is alone the sinner's plea;
At the throne of God's perfection,
Nothing else can set him free."

vig should do the carpenter work; and that members of the congregation should do the lathing. At the same meeting it was voted to purchase an eleven-hundred pound bell. The bell first purchased developed a crack, and in 1894 the congregation accepted the offer of the company which had furnished the bell to furnish another one on payment of a difference of \$80.00.

The church was dedicated May 18, 1890, by Rev. G. Hoyme, president of Konferensen. The Sunday of the dedication festivities was followed by a three-day circuit meeting of the Luverne circuit of which the congregation was then a part.

To the stranger it may seem odd that the church fronts away from the highway. In common with a number of townships, it was found that the original survey of Edison township was faulty. In 1904 the township was resurveyed. Such resurvey brought the north-south highway some rods west of the church property instead of adjoining it as originally was the case. The east-west highway on which the church had fronted was brought almost to the north edge of the cemetery. The terrain is such that it seemed most advisable that the highway should pass to the north of the church property. Accordingly arrangements were made with Henry Hermanson, the owner of the land to the north, that he furnish the land necessary for such highway, the congregation to pay one-half of the value of such land, Mr. Hermanson agreeing to provide the other half.

Because of the manner in which the church was constructed, the task of turning and moving it so that it might front on the highway, while not an impossible one, would involve the services of an expert with expensive equipment. To date the congregation has not felt warranted in incurring the large expense which any change would make necessary.

In 1890, the Konferensen, the Augustana Synod (A synod of Norwegian Lutherans to distinguish it from the present Augustana Synod which has its origin among Lutherans largely of

Swedish ancestry), and the Anti-Missouri Brotherhood united and adopted the name, The United Norwegian Lutheran Church. This union made it necessary to rearrange the parish of which this congregation was a part. It then entered into a union with Willow Creek, St. Ansgar (A congregation near what now is the city of Colton), and a newly organized congregation in Baltic. The Lanstad and Sioux Falls congregations had made arrangements to join other parishes.

In order to leave the new parish with freedom in the selection of a pastor, Rev. Midtbo accepted a call to Kansas and resigned as pastor of this and the other congregations which he had served during his ten years in this territory.

The members of the new parish had a great deal of difficulty in agreeing upon a pastor. Committees met innumerable times, returning with recommendations which were not acceptable. One of the difficulties which faced the committees was that some wished to submit the name of a pastor who belonged to the Hauge Synod. Others very strenuously opposed the calling of one who was not of The United Norwegian Lutheran Church. The spirit which prevailed is well illustrated by a notation by the secretary in his record book. He wrote: "Her mangler atter 2 eller 3 referater, som er af stor betydning. Viser stemningen i Norway Menighed med hensyn til prestevalg. Disse referater findes rimeligvis hos C. Wangsness eller Erik Berdahl. Jeg var den tid kjed af kjævelingen og besøkte ikke moderne."

Translated, the statement is: "Here again minutes of 2 or 3 meetings which are of great importance are missing. (They) show the vote in Norway Congregation with respect to choice of pastor. These minutes no doubt may be found with C. Wangsness or Erik Berdahl. At that time I was tired of the quarreling and did not attend the meetings."

These "quarrelings," as the secretary termed the discussions, should not be considered as something serious or out

to replace. It must be remembered that the Lutheran Church of the Norwegian people in America still was in a formative period. It was a time when men took very definite positions, and not easily were persuaded to change those positions. It was American democracy at work at its best.

During this period of more than two years, Rev. O. A. Berge of Inwood, Iowa; Rev. S. J. Nummedal of Jasper, Minnesota; Rev. J. Olbue of Nora, Union county, S. D.; and Rev. C. C. Moe of Mt. Vernon, S. D.; served the congregations of this parish as their time permitted. The services of these men were of inestimable value during a period of unsettled conditions.

In June, 1891, delegates were elected to the annual convention of The United Norwegian Lutheran Church and were instructed to confer with President Høyme and other leading men of the church for names of acceptable pastors. One of the members of the congregation expressed himself to the effect that the delegates do not return with a "theater" pastor ("... paa-lagde delegaterne ikke at komme tilbage med en theater prest,") evidently meaning one given to showmanship.

In the fall of 1892, it finally was agreed to extend a call to Rev. C. C. Moe. This was accepted, and he commenced his work in the parish in the spring of 1893.

Shortly after Rev. Moe commenced his work here, a parsonage was purchased in Dell Rapids by this congregation and Willow Creek congregation; and in this Rev. Moe and family made their home.

A congregation also was organized in Dell Rapids which was served by him. With five congregations to serve, he was kept very busy, and had to spend a great deal of time on the road in order to meet all his appointments. But in the spring of 1904 the St. Ansgar congregation withdrew from the parish and joined with a congregation at Colton. From that time until his death, Rev. Moe served the remaining four congregations. He was a faithful servant of the Lord. And when the sad

news of his sudden departure on January 31, 1910, reached our congregation, a sigh of sorrow and sadness was manifested everywhere. The large number present at his funeral was evidence of the love and respect in which he was held by all who knew him.

On Sunday, April 23, 1899, the congregation celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of its organization. The festive services were conducted by the pastor, assisted by Rev. L. P. Thorkven, Rev. S. J. Nummedal, and the congregation's first pastor, Rev. H. Z. Hvid. It was a day of great inspiration and joy to the congregation; and many silent prayers were sent up to the throne of Grace for His wonderfully protecting care during the twenty-five years that its members had been privileged to work together as a congregation.

Rev. Thorkven preached the anniversary sermon in the forenoon. The Ladies' Aid served dinner. Being a fine spring day, tables were set along the outside of the church where the large assemblage was treated to a splendid feast. The people convened again at two o'clock in the afternoon and, after song and prayer, the history of the congregation was read by Andrew J. Berdahl. Rev. Nummedal delivered a lecture on The Lutheran Church; and Rev. Hvid closed with an interesting talk on The Church in Pioneer Days.

On Monday a visitation meeting was conducted by Rev. Thorkven and, although this was in the busy season, a large number was present and enjoyed the second of two blessed and long-to-be-remembered days.

During 1910 the congregation again was served by pastors from the neighboring congregations. Rev. H. M. Solem of Garretson was especially helpful by taking charge of the confirmation class and in doing other necessary pastoral work for the congregation.

Following the death of Rev. Moe, committees were elected to confer about selection of a pastor. Without difficulty the committees recommended to their respective congregations the name of Rev. A. J. Bergsaker of Slayton, Minnesota. On July 7, 1910, a call was

extended to him which he accepted to take effect early in 1911. He was officially installed on January 29, 1911, by Rev. J. D. Svaalestuen of Jasper, Minnesota, at that time an officer of the circuit to which the congregation belonged.

St. Petri congregation of Dell Rapids did not join in the call to Rev. Bergsaker; but after about a year it again became a part of the parish served by him. During the first year of his pastorate here, Rev. Bergsaker resided at Baltic; but when St. Petri congregation again joined the parish, he made Dell Rapids his home.

Rev. Bergsaker was a strong and energetic worker. Due to his work, the membership increased and the church attendance became better year by year.

The Ladies' Aid had increased in membership, and the need of a basement under the church became more and more evident. A request was made by it that the congregation proceed to build such an improvement, it agreeing to pay for the material. At a meeting of the congregation on March 15, 1912, it was unanimously decided to accept, with thanks, this offer of the Ladies' Aid and to proceed with the necessary work. The basement was completed that fall and has furnished a much needed place for church festivals and meetings of various kinds.

The period of Rev. Bergsaker's services was one of harmony and good will in religious affairs, as well as improvement in the economic conditions of the members of the congregation until the nation became involved in World War I.

The call to arms took many of the young men away from their homes disrupting their work in the congregation.

Then, in 1917, The United Norwegian Lutheran Church, the Hauge Synod and the Norwegian Synod united to form the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America.

While this union was one to which the members of the congregation had looked forward with pleasant anticipation and for which many had prayed earnestly, it brought with it many diffi-

culties here as it did in innumerable other places.

Consolidation of congregations, consolidation of schools, reorganization of parishes became the order of the day. Such consolidations and reorganizations, although proper and desirable, and in the long run to the best interests of all concerned, were not accomplished without heartaches and, in many instances, no little contention. Of necessity the consolidations and reorganizations forced the removal of faithful men who had endeared themselves to the communities in which they had worked and the people whom they had served—some for long periods, others shorter periods.

Almost wholly within the same territory as that wherein the members of this congregation reside is the membership of St. Pauli congregation. It was a member of the Norwegian Synod and became a member of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America with the union in 1917. Its church is located only two miles west from that of this congregation.

At its December 10, 1917, meeting this congregation received from St. Pauli congregation a communication which read as follows:

"To Norway Congregation:

At the annual meeting of St. Pauli congregation held December 4, it was decided to elect a committee to meet with a like committee from Norway congregation, if it should see fit to elect such a committee, such joint committee to begin work on plans for a union of the two congregations.

I, as the congregation's secretary, was directed to send the report of this action to Norway congregation's annual meeting. The committee members are: Carl Hegge, Erick Hove, and Martin Erickson.

Erick Oveson, Secretary."

This suggestion for union met with favor, and this congregation elected E. J. Berdahl, Chris. Loftness and Lars Nesheim, and Rev. Bergsaker as advisory member, as a committee to work with the committee from St. Pauli congregation on plans for union.

The joint committee met in Norway church on April 28, 1918, and organized by electing E. J. Berdahl, chairman, and T. M. Erickson, secretary.

After considerable informal discus-

sion, the committee adopted the following resolutions:

1. The committee, consisting of the committees from St. Pauli and Norway congregations, recommends that St. Pauli and Norway congregations unite into one congregation, and that it unite with one other congregation to form a parish, such union to be completed as soon as present parish arrangements will permit.

"2. The committee recommends that (pending union) the congregations attend, as far as possible, each other's services.

"3. The committee resolves that the congregations work together to the best interests of a parochial school, and recommends that the school committees from each of the congregations meet to consider the best manner in which such school may be conducted, to the end that misunderstandings, which otherwise might arise, may be avoided.

4. The committee recommends that the pastors of Norway and St. Pauli congregations exchange pulpits when that may be convenient, so that Rev. Bergsaker shall preach in St. Pauli—where both congregations shall attend—and Rev. Larsgaard in Norway church, each of the pastors in this manner preaching to both congregations gathered in one place. The reason for this recommendation is to get the people of the congregations to attend each other's services so that together they may worship the oftener.

"5. The chairman and secretary are empowered to call a meeting of this committee when they find it necessary.

To his minutes of this meeting, the secretary added the following: "All resolutions of the meeting were adopted by a unanimous vote, and all the business was conducted in a kindly and brotherly spirit indicating that all wished union."

On June 26, 1918, a special meeting of the congregation was held at the home of Lars Nesheim to consider the committee's report. But at that meeting the committee announced that it was not in position to submit a report for the reason that a committee from Ullens-

vang and Beaver Creek congregations had asked the committee for opportunity to meet with it to consider the matter of forming a new parish. Thereafter the committee reported to the congregation, on July 5, 1918, that, on June 26, it had met at Garretson with committees from Zion (Garretson), St. Pauli, Ullensvang and Beaver Creek congregations. At such meeting it was announced that Ullensvang and Beaver Creek congregations had arranged to unite, and that the united congregation (now Palisade) desired to become a part of a parish with Zion and the congregation to be formed by a union of St. Pauli and Norway congregations.

The secretary records in his minutes that there were those who voiced the opinion that a parish of all these congregations would be much too large; others felt that it would be quite an ideal parish, for the Garretson congregation would be central, with the other two so located as to lessen travel for the pastor in visiting members of the congregations. The discussion resulted in the adoption, by unanimous vote, of the following motion: "That the new congregation, consisting of St. Pauli and Norway congregations, Zion congregation and the new congregation consisting of Ullensvang and Beaver Creek congregations, unite to form one parish; and that this arrangement become effective as soon as present parish arrangements will permit.

At the same meeting, this congregation authorized its trustees to transfer the property of the congregation to the proposed new congregation of St. Pauli and Norway when union should be completed, conditioned that St. Pauli do likewise.

The motion to unite these congregations into one parish was submitted to the respective congregations.

At a meeting on September 23, 1918, the committee from this congregation reported from the joint committee that Zion congregation and the united congregations of Ullensvang and Beaver Creek had adopted unanimously the arrangements proposed by this congregation. It reported further that St.

Pauli congregation had voted against such arrangements, giving as the reasons, first, that in good conscience it could not sever its present parish arrangements because there was not reasonable prospect that the other congregation with which it was affiliated could secure satisfactory parish arrangements; and, second, because the proposed parish would entail too much work for one pastor, so that the members would not receive as much spiritual service as it was felt they should have.

The situation was discussed at length, and then the following motion was adopted: "That Zion congregation, the united congregations of Ullensvang and Beaver Creek, and Norway congregations unite to form a parish; and that St. Pauli congregation, which cannot now join, be given opportunity to join as soon as its present parish arrangements permit, if it then desires to do so."

To facilitate the reorganization of this congregation and parish which he had served faithfully and with much success, Rev. Bergsaker, on March 8, 1918, tendered his resignation to take effect not later than January 1, 1919. Rev. Bergsaker had endeared himself to the members of the parish to such a degree that the members of this congregation hoped that arrangements could be made to retain him, and at first refused to accept the resignation. But as arrangements for organization of a new parish developed, it became evident that it could not do otherwise than accept the resignation. This was done, but with the request that he give such service as he could spare from his work at Elk Point, from which place he had accepted a call, until such time as the newly organized parish should secure a pastor. He did continue to serve for a short period in 1919, but found that distance and the amount of work in his parish made it impossible for him to continue here.

While awaiting completion of new parish arrangements and the necessary details incident to the calling of another pastor, this congregation was served

temporarily by Rev. Larsgaard of Garretson, Rev. Solem of Lennox, and Rev. Aanestad of Sherman. Then, on August 27, 1919, a call was extended to Rev. B. J. Rothnem of Dell Rapids to serve the congregation until such time as new parish arrangements could be perfected and a pastor secured. He accepted the call and served the congregation until Rev. T. A. Mason of Beloit, Wisconsin, who had accepted a call from the new parish, was installed on January 9, 1921.

Rev. Mason continued as a faithful servant of the Lord until failing health forced him to retire. He conducted his last church service in Norway church on July 14, 1940. While Rev. Mason's time of service commenced in the early period of reconstruction following World War I, a period when people faced serious financial difficulties, he carried on his work in such a quiet, earnest and sincere manner that all were encouraged to face the future with hopeful anticipation both in material and spiritual affairs. His sermons were to the point, were delivered in choice and exact language, and were a reflection of his life as he lived it with the people of his parish.

With the retirement of Rev. Mason, it again became necessary for the parish to search out another to serve it. While a committee was at work to decide on one to whom a call should be extended, Rev. Henry D. Halvorson, now of Limon, Colorado, was secured to serve the parish temporarily. He served from August 1, 1940, to June 1, 1941, preaching his last sermon in Norway church on May 25, 1941. He was followed by Mr. Randolph Ramseth, a student at Luther Theological Seminary, who served through June and July.

In the meantime, a call had been extended to Rev. Erling W. Rossing of Duluth, Minnesota. He accepted, and was installed in Norway church at an evening service on August 3, 1941, the formal installation being performed by Rev. R. E. Hofstad, then president of Augustana Academy in Canton, South Dakota. He was assisted* by Rev.

Odean Monson, of Jewell, Iowa, Rev. Martin C. Thompson, of Emmetsburg, Iowa, and Rev. Clarence O. Johnson, of Oldham, South Dakota.

In its history, prepared for the fiftieth anniversary celebration of this congregation, the committee, referring to Rev. Mason, said:

"He has continued as a faithful servant in the Lord's Vineyard up to the present day; and we hope and pray that God will give him strength and wisdom from on high to continue his blessed work for the uplifting of humanity and the salvation of souls for years to come." Very sincerely this may be said of and for Rev. Rossing.

While Rev. Mason was the pastor, he had those from this congregation and those from Zion congregation who were studying for confirmation meet together in Garretson. This made for no little saving of time to the pastor. Improved farm to market roads made such consolidation of classes seem quite logical; and the greater number meeting together made for more interest and better work.

Because of studying together, it was natural that those in the classes should desire to be together in the confirmation services, as well. Acceding to such desires, it became a general although not the universal rule to have the confirmation services in Garretson. This practice has been continued while Rev. Rossing has been pastor, the wishes of the parents as to place where the confirmation services should be held always having been respected.

Rev. Rossing has been instrumental in organizing a parish Brotherhood instead of Brotherhoods in the individual congregations. The gathering together in this way of a larger group of men has made for greater interest and inspiration than usually is the case in smaller groups. It also has made for unity in the thinking through of various church problems, both local and those of the synod as a whole.

Recently there has been no little discussion as to whether or not this congregation ought to join with Zion congregation so as to make one large and

strong congregation with financial resources to erect a church in Garretson in keeping with what many consider to be the position of the Lutherans in this territory. Those favoring such union feel that, worshipping together, the members of what now are two congregations could enjoy and be blessed by the additional services which then would be theirs. Strength in numbers would mean much. And such union is logical, so it is said, for the two groups are one in community interest.

With the natural conservatism of those of Norwegian blood, such change is not likely to take place, if it ever does, without very careful consideration of every phase of the question.

During its entire existence, the congregation has been careful to guard well its church so that it might not be used for any purpose other than that for which it was dedicated. It is recorded in the minutes of January 12, 1904, that a request by one H. Servold to use the church for the showing of lantern-slide pictures was turned down. These were high-class picture of scenes in Norway taken by Mr. Servold himself in travels through that country. There were no pictures to which the most fastidious could take exception, as the writer knows, for he saw them at another place. Yet, according to good practice, the action of the congregation was the correct one. At that time it did not have a basement to serve as a social room in which such a program with propriety might have been given.

By motion at its meeting on April 4, 1908, the congregation instructed its delegates to the annual convention of the synod to vote against any appropriations of money to Concordia College. No explanation for the motion was given at that time. At the next meeting, it was voted that the reason for this action be stated. It then was stated that the reason was that Concordia College had accepted gifts of money from Carnegie and Rockefeller. (Evidently it wished no trucking by the Church to men who had accumulated vast wealth by what its members considered unfair means.) Without explan-

ation, however, at the following meeting, the congregation voted to strike the name, Rockefeller, from the report of its previous meeting.

Here, as in the synod itself, the transition from the Norwegian to the English was slow in coming — much too slow, many would say — and many who otherwise might have been active members were prevented from having that privilege. It was not until at a meeting of the congregation on May 14, 1913, that it was voted to have one service during the summer in the English language "in order to give those of Lutheran faith, but not of Norwegian ancestry opportunity to hear the Word of God preached in a language which they understand."

At the December 14, 1920, meeting it was decided that half of the services should be conducted in Norwegian and half in English. This was followed by action, on December 12, 1927, that two-thirds of the services should be conducted in English and one-third in Norwegian. Then, on December 10, 1930, the congregation voted that both morning and afternoon services of the next Mission Festival should be conducted in the English language. Thereafter, apparently by common consent, for there is no recorded motion to such effect, all services have been conducted in the English language.

The minutes of all meetings of the congregation are recorded in the Norwegian language until December 12, 1921. The minutes of that meeting are recorded in English; and at that meeting it was decided that all future reports should be recorded in the English language.

It would be interesting to know the total annual income of the pioneer pastors. That it was meager, we know. It could not have been otherwise, for the people whom they served were struggling to establish themselves in a new territory. Most of them had little else than the ox-team and covered wagon which furnished their transportation to the place which had been selected as home. Time was required to transform the raw prairie land into soil that would

produce crops. It has been recorded that, during this period and even after the harvesting of the first few crops, many of the "sod-house dwellers" were dependent upon expensive credit extended by merchants with a full measure of optimism as to what the future had in store. Such a situation left little money even for the most essential necessities of life, not to mention contributions to the salary of the pastor.

In many places efforts to solve the problem were made by helping the pastor to acquire a tract of land either as his own or as the property of the congregation or parish so that he might raise a large part of the produce necessary for the support of himself and family. The matter of the purchase of such a tract by this congregation in order that it might have a resident pastor was brought to the attention of the congregation by Lasse Bothun at a meeting April 1, 1876. He announced that he and Johannes E. Berdahl had purchased an 80-acre tract with the thought that the congregation ought to have such a place for the pastor. He explained that no one was to feel that the congregation was under obligation to purchase it. He stated that they had purchased it because it could be had for a reasonable price; and they would turn it over to the congregation for what it had cost them; or, if the congregation wished, it might take only 40 acres. However, he strongly urged the congregation to purchase the land for future use if it could not use it at present. It was explained, too, that the land was near that which had been selected for a cemetery.

Because the roads were almost impassable, the attendance at this meeting was very small and no action was taken. The meeting adjourned to April 5 at which time the congregation voted to purchase the east 40-acre tract. Committees were selected to solicit the funds necessary to pay for it. While the congregation agreed to pay only \$50 for the land, it did not succeed in making full payment of this obligation until the land was sold in the summer of 1881.

The land in question is the northeast quarter of the northwest quarter of section four, in Edison township. The motion to sell provided that it should not be sold for less than \$90. According to the records in the office of the registrar of deeds, it was sold for \$100.

At its meeting, October 23, 1874, the question of how to compensate the pastor was discussed at some length with the result that it was decided that the congregation could not promise a definite sum; but free-will subscriptions should be received to cover his salary from October 23, 1874, to October 23, 1875, and the trustees were directed to pay the proceeds to him semi-annually. There was some discussion, also, as to how the congregation could contribute its share of the feed for the pastor's horse. It is recorded that, in as much as very few had any corn or oats to spare, each of those present should contribute twenty-five or thirty cents for this purpose.

Whatever may have happened to Rev. Hvid's salary, there must have been some feeling that he had not been paid in full, for long after he had terminated his services Lasse Bothun was directed to write to him in regard to it. And at its October, 1877, meeting the congregation voted to pay him a balance of \$12.00 as being due on his salary.

As with Rev. Hvid, so Rev. Kleven also was called without provision for definite salary. Prior to his being called, a committee was appointed to solicit free-will contributions toward salary so the congregation might have something as a basis for what it could offer. The record is silent as to the result.

After he was called, mention was made of the fact that he did not have horse and buggy which were essential in his work, but which he was without means to provide for himself; and question was raised as to how these could be supplied. It was announced that Willow Creek congregation would provide a horse if this congregation would furnish buggy. Erick J. Berdahl and Lasse Bothun then were directed to

borrow the money necessary to secure suitable buggy, and the trustees were instructed to execute a note for the amount. But apparently this was to be a loan to the pastor, for it is recorded, "at kjopesummen laenes presten paa 2 aar." Later the congregation voted to assume this obligation.

The congregation did vote that each farmer should furnish one bushel of wheat and one bushel of oats to be left with Johannes Berdahl for delivery to the pastor. Presumably this was intended to be an annual contribution, although not so stated.

Rev. Opsal fared a little better, for in his second year he was promised a salary of \$150 and from each farmer belonging to the congregation one bushel of wheat and two bushels of oats. The congregation also agreed to pay its share toward rent of a parsonage.

Rev. Midtbo followed with a salary of only \$125, at least for one year, for it is recorded that \$94 had been collected and that \$31 remained to be collected to complete what was due him for the year.

One cannot help but wonder how the pioneer pastors managed on their very meager incomes. Yet their children and grandchildren are found in positions of prominence in church and civil life attesting to the fact that somehow the families managed to work out the problems of advanced education.

It may be said for the parishioners that, while they were short of cash, most of them were liberal with the produce from their farms and in this way added materially to the pastor's income.

At the May 23, 1875, meeting, upon strong urging by Rev. Hvid, the congregation voted to send a delegate to the annual convention of Konferensen, although it had not yet joined that synod. Several were suggested, but excused themselves because they were too busy. Lasse Bothun finally agreed to go. When question of his expenses was brought up, he stated he would have to hire help during the time he would be gone, a cost of approxi-

mately \$6, and would be satisfied if the congregation paid this. A motion then was adopted that those present each pay twenty-five cents toward such expense. In addition, Johannes Berdahl volunteered to furnish him with a horse and buggy with which to make the trip. Such transportation was necessary, for it must be remembered that there were no railroad facilities at that time.

That year the convention of Konferensen was held in Shell Rock, Iowa, June 2-10, with 44 pastors, 4 professors and 60 delegates present.

All the pastors of the congregation have been zealous in instructing the young people in the usual courses of religious education as used in the Lutheran Church, concluding with the ceremony of confirmation as the rite of renewal and ratification of the baptismal vow.

The first confirmation service in the congregation was held in 1874 when Carrie Loftness and Trina Bentson knelt at such altar as had been prepared for the occasion to renew and ratify their baptismal vows.

The following year four boys, Martin Bentson, Albert Hatlelie, Anton Nitteberg and Ole J. Berdahl were confirmed. Of the members of these two classes, Ole J. Berdahl still survives and has his church membership in the parish. He now resides in Garretson and is a member of Zion Lutheran Congregation of that place.

The very first winter that those of this group spent in Dakota Territory, they established public schools which were conducted in the sod houses of certain of the settlers. Almost as early, too, the members of the congregation arranged for Sunday School and parochial school.

At a meeting September 6, 1875, Rev. Hvid stressed the importance of separate Sunday Schools in the eastern and western parts of the congregation and urged that such schools be established.

The congregation was fortunate in that one of its charter members, Mr. L. A. Vadheim, was particularly well qualified for such work. He was a "seminarist" (a student at the seminary) from

Norway, and gave freely of his time in Sunday School and parochial school work. He volunteered to establish a Sunday School in the eastern part of the congregation and to spend two out of every three Sundays in supervising the work. Johannes Loftness and Andrew Berdahl volunteered to supervise the work in the western part those Sundays when Mr. Vadheim could not be present.

For a number of years following, besides being precentor at the church services and supervisor of the Sunday School work, Mr. Vadheim conducted parochial school in the congregation from one to three months, much of the time at a salary of from \$10 to \$15 per month.

No doubt the stress upon elementary Christian education by the members of the congregation has been an important factor in inducing many of the young people to attend schools of advanced learning. It probably is correct to say that more young people from this congregation than from any other congregation attended Augustana College prior to its consolidation with Lutheran Normal School at Sioux Falls. The same interest has continued through the years, although development of high schools in the surrounding towns has had its part in reducing the attendance at the church academies.

The congregation manifested its interest in advanced Christian education by taking active part in the Augustana College Association, the organization which operated Augustana College while it was located in Canton, by sending delegates to its business meetings. And always the members of the congregation have contributed liberally to the support of it and the other schools of the synod.

Most of the young people of the congregation have been active in young people's movements of a religious nature. In 1899, John G. Berdahl, one of the young men of the congregation and then a student at Augustana College, took an active part in the organization of the South Dakota State Luther League, a state-wide intersynodical

organization, and the following year was its president. From 1910 to 1915, James O. Berdahl, also a son of the congregation, was its president. Following the organization of the South Dakota State Luther League, a Luther League was organized in this congregation which joined the State Luther League and through it became a part of the intersynodical Luther League of America which was the pattern for the present International Luther League of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

There were young women's organizations (pigeforening) both in the eastern and in the western sections of the congregations — their meetings were attended much of the time by the young men, as well—which were active long before there was a Luther League. Among other things, they supplied the ornamental fence surrounding the cemetery; and the western division also supplied the first organ used in the church. These items were presented to the congregation on their behalf by Erick J. Berdahl at a meeting of the congregation May 31, 1899. Rev. Moe, in well chosen words, received them for the congregation, and thanked the young folks for the gifts and for their interest in the work of the church.

At that time, the officers of the eastern division of the "pigeforening" were Miss Unnie Henjum, president and treasurer, and Miss Andrea Munson, secretary; those of the western division were Miss Betsey Bothun, president; Miss Christine S. Berdahl, secretary; and Miss Martha L. Berdahl, treasurer.

About fifty years ago there also was organized within the membership of the congregation, largely out of its group of young people, a prohibition society, one of the many throughout the state and nation which did much to bring about that splendid era of prohibition, a return to which soon must be made if the nation is not to suffer the fate of nations of old which disappeared because of the debauchery of their people.

Those who were present at the organization meeting seventy-five years ago all have gone to their final rest.

Anfin J. Berdahl, who died May 31, 1943, was the last of that group. Most of them have found their earthly resting place in the cemetery on the hill by the church of the congregation which they organized.

Someone has said: "Some men so live that they lift their age so that all men walk on higher ground." Not only those who, seventy-five years ago, organized this congregation, but the other pioneers who came later and became a part of it, built a new community in what was a wilderness. In doing so, they used as their building stones for a solid foundation the Christian home sustained and buttressed by the Word of God proclaimed from the pulpits in their homes and the church which they built. The Sunday Schools and parochial schools—the public schools, too—filled in to more fully complete the Christian training which, they knew, was so necessary to the foundation of any community in which living would be worth while. Now "men walk on higher ground" because of what the pioneers struggled to build.

There is a debt due to those pioneers. It well has been said that, "The only way that the present generation of men can pay its debt to past generations is to place future generations in debt to the present." Without question, that has been and is being done. The ever changing membership has carried on, not perfectly, of course, for only in the Divine is perfection, but with as full a measure of success as can be expected.

The records do not indicate that anyone more than another attempted to assume leadership, or to set himself above anyone else. Seemingly the interests of the congregation always have been uppermost in the minds of all.

Differences of opinion? Yes. But through discussions, differences are ironed out. He who thinks of discussions, even though at times in forceful language, as "quarrelings" does not realize that this is Americanism at work. In an autonomous body, discussions not only must be expected, but but have a definite part. There is not much opportunity for "quarrelings" in

those organizations where outside authority dictates what may or may not be done. Lutherans recognize the congregation as a self-governing organization. No other organization can dictate to it what it shall do.

Through the years, the secretaries of the congregation have recorded at some length discussions which have been had on matters of interest. As one reviews these records, he can conclude, only, that human nature has not changed during the seventy-five years of existence of the congregation. Strong-minded men, as was their privilege, have argued strongly for what they believed to be right; others equally strong-minded have taken opposite positions. When a result was reached, who shall say which position was correct. The majority not always is right, even though it must prevail.

Seventy-five years, measured in terms of a human life, is little more than the allotted "three score and ten." At the beginning of that period, in material things, those of this congregation were little in advance of the Revolutionary War period. The homes—dug-outs—sod—in a few instances, log. (The living room of the Julian H. Berdahl home is the log and second house of his grandfather, Johannes Berdahl. The first house was of sod.)

In most instances, home-made candles dispelled the darkness of night. It was a happy custom to leave such light or the simple kerosene lamp, turned down low to save the kerosene, in or near the unshaded window. What a welcome sight such a light was to the one forced to be out late at night, especially in the storm of winter!

Oxen—in a few instances, horses—were the motive power for the cultivation of the fields, and for the trip to town unless one chose to walk.

Families were as far apart as the time required to walk the distances separating them.

Today, in sickness or other emergency, through means of the telephone, it is as if the neighbor were in the same room. The automobile has made the distance only minutes away, where, be-

fore, the distance was measured in hours.

The tractor and other improved machinery have lightened the burdens of the farmer and have increased many fold his producing power. Electricity and its appliances and other household conveniences very materially have dissipated the drudgery that was the lot of the housewife.

All this has made for better and more comfortable living. All this has given more time, too, for the social activities of the community.

May it truthfully be said that the added time has resulted in a more active church life than was possible under the primitive pioneer conditions!

As a tribute to the pioneers, pastors and lay people alike, for the Christian homes which they established, for the religious life which they sought to nurture, for the church which they built we can do no better than to quote the poem by Rev. B. H. J. Habel which he graciously has consented that we may use, and which, he says, may be sung to the tune of "America, the Beautiful."

I OWE A DEBT OF GRATITUDE

I owe a debt of gratitude
To those who went before,
The sturdy pioneers who came
From Norway's rocky shore;
Who on the prairies made their homes
In humble huts of sod,
While on the highest hills they built
A stately house to God.

I owe a debt of gratitude
That faithful pastors gave
Their lives to tell their fellowmen
How Jesus came to save;
In deepest woods, on prairie trail
They labored, suffered, died,
To tell of God's great love to man,
In Christ, the crucified.

I owe a debt of gratitude
To everyone who taught
A child to know his Father's will,
And how he's dearly bought;
To all who work with faithfulness,
Through happiness and tears,
Within my own beloved church
Throughout a hundred years.

I'll pay my debt of gratitude
To those who went before
By never yielding up my place
Though weary and footsore.

With faithfulness I'll work and walk
The way my fathers trod;
Some day I'll thank the pioneers
In heaven at home with God.



MEN OF THE CONGREGATION, 1949

Left to right, front row: J. O. Nesheim, Theodore Hatlestad, Gilbert Kringen, Edward Hermanson, Iver J. Henjum, Rev. E. W. Rossing, Eric Hermanson, Julian Berdahl, Carl Meier, Andrew Hove, Edward Fuglsby.

Second row: E. B. Kringen, Marlyn Larson, Severt Nesheim, Lloyd Hove, Ole Songstad, Richard Solheim, Milton Loftness, Arthur Fuglsby, Henry Stalheim, Chris. Loftness.

(Correction, page 47)

Third row: Dennis Hove, William Rossman, Hans Hoeppner, Hobart Haagenson, Paul Hatlestad, Orlen Berge, Henry Evans, Selmer Hovden, Martin Berge, Philip Hatlestad, Victor Danielson, Leo Migler, Libni Hermanson, Elmer Gunderson, Wayne Hove.

Back row: Elmer Larson, Oliver Swenson, Wayne Larson.

In this history, no attempt has been made to list those who have been, or now are, members of the congregation, or who regularly support its activities even though they are not members. At the time this picture was taken, a general invitation was extended to all such to be present. Naturally several found that they could not be at the church at the time.

LADIES' AID HISTORY

A mission society was organized in Norway Congregation in the fall of 1874, at the home of Mrs. Albert Brandvold. The first president was Mrs. Erick J. Berdahl, the first treasurer Mrs. Lasse Bothun. The charter members were: Mrs. Andrew Berdahl, Mrs. Erick Berdahl, Mrs. Johannes Berdahl, Miss Martha Berdahl (later Mrs. Lars J. Otterness), Mrs. Lasse Bothun, Mrs. Albert Brandvold (later Mrs. Ellef E. Ellefson), Mrs. John Hermanson, Mrs. Thor Hermanson, Mrs. Olaus Jenson, Mrs. Jens Johnson, Mrs. Johannes Loftesness, Miss Kari Loftesness (Mrs. C. H. Wangness), Mrs. Ole Nesheim, Mrs. Ole Njos, Mrs. Torbjorn Olson, Mrs. Herman Wangness.

There are no records of the meetings except the constitution written in the Norwegian language by Rev. H. Z. Hvid. It states that the small income from their work shall be divided between Home and Foreign Missions; that each member according to her ability shall do her best for the growth and advancement of the society.

Due to the long distances and the great amount of work to be done, meetings were begun in the forenoon.

The work consisted of knitting woolen socks and mittens, sewing shirts, aprons, and dresses, and making warm comforters. The articles later were sold at auction, and a fair sum was sent to missions each year.

A contribution to the Ladies' Aid history by one of the early pioneers gives us just a little better understanding of conditions, and a pioneer's reaction to later customs: "Now the mode of transportation in the Good Old Pioneer Days was very primitive compared with the present day. The shorter distances were usually made on foot. If oxen, or in some cases horses, were used, they were hitched to a lumber wagon, a board laid across the box or a home made bench set in the box for a seat.

But they got there, usually on time. No tire trouble in those days."

"The meeting place was always at a member's residence. She would be the hostess for the day, serving both dinner and lunch. They had special social hour but kept busy with sewing and knitting. They came together for work, not sociability.

"On the question of how members dressed, will say that in the judgment of 'A Pioneer' who is writing this, they were dressed more neatly than at the present time. The calico or gingham dress was neat, and made to fit the person wearing it covering the entire body. The hair was worn in a roll at the back of the head, giving the ladies a very graceful appearance. They would wear furs in winter for warmth, not in the summer for style. The hope of the aged mother is, that the old styles may soon return and that the dresses may cover arms, neck, and legs.

"We had no one in our first Aid that could be termed as outstanding from the others, but all worked in harmony with the only object in view to do all in their power to help spread the gospel through foreign and home missions." Contributed by A Pioneer, 1927.

There was a period of inactivity on account of drought and the grasshopper plague. In 1886 it was agreed to have two organizations as the congregation was spread over a large territory. The modes of travel made it difficult to travel long distances. The East Ladies' Aid was organized at the home of Mrs. John Hermanson March 19, 1886. The first president was Mrs. E. E. Ellefson; the first treasurer, Mrs. John Hermanson. The treasurer's record shows the following members: Mrs. Rognald Bentson, Mrs. Gulbran Erickson, Mrs. E. E. Ellefson, Mrs. Knut Hensjum, Mrs. John Hermanson, Mrs. Jens Johnson, Mrs. Lars Nesheim, Mrs. Ole Stalheim.



THE EAST NORWAY LADIES' AID, about 1895

Standing, left to right: Mrs. A. A. Grinde, Mrs. Nils Henjum, Mrs. E. E. Ellefson, Mrs. Knute Henjum, Mrs. John Hove.

Sitting, Left to right: Mrs. L. Nesheim, Mrs. John Hermanson, Mrs. Inger Hermanson, Mrs. Rognald Bentson, Mrs. Lasse Fuglsby.

The West Ladies' Aid was organized at the home of Mrs. Johannes Loftness, Tuesday, March 30, 1886. The members were: Mrs. Anfin Berdahl, Mrs. Erick Berdahl, Mrs. Johannes Berdahl, Miss Anna Otterness (Mrs. Herman J. Berdahl), Mrs. Ole Berdahl, Mrs. P. L. Hatlestad, Miss Synva Henjum, Mrs. Johannes Loftness, Mrs. Ole Nesheim, Mrs. Chris Wangsness. They had no elected president but the secretary, Mrs. Ole Berdahl, served as chairman, and Mrs. Chris. Wangsness was the first treasurer. In 1886 Mrs. Chris. Wangsness was elected the first president.

Each group decided to meet every two weeks at the home of one of the members, to have devotion consisting

of Scripture Reading, prayer and singing of hymns. Each member was to pay a ten-cent due and donate some knitted or sewed article to be sold at auctions held once or twice a year. That these pioneer women worked faithfully to complete as many articles as possible for the sales and at the same time received inspiration from their meetings is shown in the secretary's records. As the pastor or some member read a mission or inspirational article, the others sewed or knitted, then stopped work for a period of devotion. One secretary wrote: "Our income was a little more than \$100, which we felt quite good as we couldn't start our Ladies' Aid until late on account of bad roads and weather. Most of us have been

quite diligent, so I do not think anyone can say we have been slovenly."

As was true in the earlier period, these women, too, often walked to the meetings carrying necessary supplies for the day, such as quilt frames. Usually the president was in charge of the materials—calico, gingham, thread, needles, yarn, etc. Later was added fancy work—crocheted tidies for rocking chairs, pin cushions, crocheted lace for pillow cases, embroidered articles, so the list of purchases varied through the years.

One member felt that she had advanced considerably when she and some of the children could drive to Ladies' Aid with one horse hitched to a new hay rake.

Ladies Aid Day was of great importance. It offered an opportunity for service in God's Kingdom; it was a time for spiritual nourishment; and, not to be overlooked, it helped to fill the need of an occasional visit with friends.

With our telephones, radios, automobiles, good roads, and other advantages that we take for granted, we can scarcely realize the isolation of each family and how satisfying it must have been to spend a day with friends. The records contain evidence of this. It lists names of visitors with thanks for making the meetings more pleasant, thanks to the choir for attending thus making the period more inspirational, "Everyone was so happy and in such good spirits and we accomplished so much especially since so many girls came and helped us," the beautiful tribute to members who had passed away.

July 4, 1890, was celebrated at the home of Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Berdahl. There was a speaker, Judge Palmer, music by the Brandon band, baseball games and a shooting match. After all expenses were paid, each group received the "neat" sum of \$33.82. All seemed to have had a good time except the women who worked hard all day at the various stands.

They decided to get together the following Sunday for a little fun and to have an oyster supper. It was a very

hot day, and the secretary wrote, "We wouldn't have needed to cook the oysters. They were warm enough anyway."

On December 11, 1901, the two Aids had a meeting at the home of Mrs. O. J. Berdahl, and decided to unite. Officers elected were: Mrs. E. E. Ellefson, president; Mrs. John Hove, secretary; Mrs. Herman Hermanson, treasurer. The Norway Ladies' Aid has continued as one body since that time.

Devotion was conducted in the Norwegian language and records also were in Norwegian until 1920.

In 1906 the group departed from the all-day meeting, and started the afternoon meetings. After a few years the custom of setting the tables gave way to serving a plate lunch.

Through the appeal of missionary, Marie Anderson, a Chinese girl, Ruth Loto, was adopted in March, 1907. She



Ruth Loto

was a small baby found by the wayside. Ruth was supported by Norway Ladies' Aid until her death in 1929.

In 1900 the Ladies' Aid financed the building of the addition to the church. In 1912 a big project was undertaken—

building a basement under the church.

Meals were served in the basement for the first time at a mission meeting, September 19-22 of that year.

After the completion of the basement, the balance in the treasury was \$4.24, allowing no means for the customary special gifts at Christmas to missions and charities. The members showed their sense of responsibility and eagerness to serve by borrowing \$100 to make these gifts possible.

Norway Ladies' Aid was one of the first three in the Sioux Falls circuit to apply for membership in the W. M. F. when the organization meeting was held in Willow Creek Church, May 26, 1920. It was the first Aid to pledge \$500 to the Augustana Endowment Fund.

Special projects in which the Aid has participated include: liberal sums to appeals from the church schools, a room furnished at Sioux Valley Hospital, a generous gift to the building fund of a Home Mission church at Northome, Minnesota, the Centennial Fund, Dina Johnson Scholarship Fund, Lutheran World Action, United Mission Advance, Bethesda Building Fund, various appeals during World War I and World War II, Marie Anderson's School for Girls in China.

Generous help has been given locally: building the basement in 1912, remodeling basement in 1926, installing furnace, redecorating church, purchasing communion set, helping the congregation pay its obligation to the General Budget, and assisting in various other ways.

Interest in and loyal support of the Women's Missionary Federation are shown by continued participation in all its departments.

Down through the years Ladies' Aid brings a variety of memories—many happy times together, naturally a few disagreements, joy in service, a great deal of planning, strawberry and ice cream socials with hard work of turning freezers of home-made ice cream, excitement of preparation when menus were elaborate and one member seemed to vie with another, the beautiful layer cake on the high stand grac-

ing the center of the table, the smell of good coffee, the treasurer with a glass dish collecting the dimes, our modern and efficient way of serving when much of the lunch can be purchased at bakery or store.

The later years have had their problems, too, one of which was sugar and coffee rationing during World War II. The president made application at the O P A office each month for the allotment according to the number served, then divided the small allowance among the members of the committee, about one cup of sugar to each. Many of these less important things that seemed so difficult and trying at the time, become memories that we can cherish and about which we can joke.

We wish to express our gratitude to the faithful pastors of the congregation for the spiritual help and inspiration they have given. The early pastors understood and shared the pioneer hardships. The people found in them faithful servants of the Lord. Conditions have changed, but we find in our pastors of more recent years the same faithfulness to their people and the desire that the members of the congregation shall love and serve the Lord.

We must not omit the part that the men have had in an inconspicuous way in the work of the Ladies' Aid. They have attended meetings; they have worked hard when suppers and dinners have been served; they have not complained because the women went early leaving them to finish the work at home, and to get the family ready to come later; they have paid generously for articles sold at auction; they have served as auctioneers. Truly, some of our men are "Ladies' Aid Heroes;" and we extend to them a hearty, "Thank you."

The pioneer mothers living in lowly homes and sod houses on the prairies did not neglect the Word of God. They tried to instill into the minds of their children Christian truths to carry with them through life. They organized a mission society for greater service to the Lord. They expected no praise, no earthly reward. The aim of the Ladies'

Aid has been to carry on the work begun by them, to support Missions, Education and Charities, as well as giving help to the local congregation. May we never forget the pioneer mothers, who bore the burdens of early years in order that we might reap the benefits! May we cherish the memories of the many faithful members who have continued

the work down through the years!

The present officers of the Norway Ladies' Aid are: president, Mrs. Henry Stalheim; vice president, Mrs. Archie Hove; secretary, Mrs. Lloyd Hove; treasurer, Mrs. Victor Danielson.

Mrs. Julian Berdahl,
Historian



THE LADIES' AID, May, 1949

Left to right, front row: Mrs. Albert Berdahl, Mrs. Paul Hatlestad, Mrs. Hans Hoepner, Mrs. Elmer Gunderson, Mrs. Severt Nesheim, Mrs. Unie Loftness, Mrs. Anna Larson, Mrs. I. J. Henjum, Mrs. J. O. Nesheim, Mrs. Edward Hermanson, Mrs. E. B. Kringen

Second row: Mrs. Omar Langloss, Mrs. Bennie Hammer, Mrs. Wayne Larson, Mrs. Oliver Swenson, Mrs. Hobart Haagenson, Mrs. Julian Berdahl, Mrs. Milton Loftness, Mrs. Melvin Nesheim, Mrs. Gilbert Kringen, Mrs. Lloyd Hove, Mrs. Carl Meier, Mrs. Henry Stalheim, Mrs. Richard Solheim, Mrs. Victor Danielson, Mrs. Martin Berge, Mrs. Archie Hove, Mrs. Eric Hermanson, Mrs. Libni Hermanson, Mrs. Henry Evans.

Back Row: Mrs. Leo Migler, Mrs. Ole Songstad, Mrs. E. W. Rossing, Mrs. Elmer Larson, Mrs. William Rossman, Mrs. Ernest Ormseth, Mrs. Arthur Fuglsby, Mrs. Eddie Larson, Mrs. Theodore Hatlestad.

Members not in picture: Mrs. Gunder Aschim, Mrs. Aletta Berg, Mrs. Melvin Berge, Mrs. Robert Danielson, Mrs. Norman Fuglsby, Miss Bertha Henjum, Mrs. Selmer Hovden, Mrs. Martin Johnson, Mrs. Albert Larson, Mrs. Chris. Loftness, Mrs. Carl Nelson, Mrs. Herman Rehfeldt, Mrs. Severina Sande, Mrs. Sylvia Solheim.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6.

Education in a Christian manner was just as important to the early settlers as it is today. Beginning in the 1870's, Lasse A. Vadheim conducted Parochial or Norwegian school in various school houses. These school sessions were held all day for about four months the beginning of each year, then vacation for several months, and English (now known as Public) school the remainder of the year.

At the annual business meeting in 1875, Mr. Vadheim announced that he would conduct a Sunday School two Sundays in the east part and one Sunday in the west part of the congregation. Johannes Loftness and Andrew Berdahl were to take charge when Vadheim could not be present. On November 24, 1879, Mr. Vadheim announced that he would use the money, which he had been promised as his compensation, to purchase suitable books for the Sunday School, preferably "Jenson's Readers" (laeseboker) since there was a shortage of these. In the early 1890's Sunday School was organized at the church, also under the direction of Mr. Vadheim. It was conducted in Norwegian with two, sometimes three classes, "Forklaring", "Katekismus", "ABC". There would be a sermon by the leader, singing and classes. Under date of April 24, 1894, it is recorded that Nils Henjum and A. A. Grinde were elected to supervise the Sunday School which should begin the following Sunday. In May 1896, A. A. Grinde again was elected Superintendent with Hans Rognaldson his assistant. Nils N. Henjum was also a faithful teacher during many of those early years.

After this time there was not any regular religious instruction for many years. Parochial school was held for one month in the summer most of the

years. It was held at times in School Districts No. 34, 35, 130 and 13, and also at the church. Teachers were paid sometimes by the congregation and sometimes by the parents who were expected to pay a certain sum for each child.

When Rev. Moe was pastor, he conducted catechization of all the children several times each year as part of the morning service.

For several years prior to 1907, Mrs. Ole J. Berdahl conducted a Sunday School at various periods in the school house in District No. 13, at other periods in the church.

During the years when there was no Sunday School, two children's programs always were given—in the summer, Children's Day; in the winter, the Christmas program. Children's Day consisted of morning worship, dinner, and an afternoon program by the children. For many years these were under the direction of Miss Clara B. Berdahl.

Mention must be made of the confirmation classes conducted by pastors and laymen. In early years, the young people walked to the homes of various ones who, in the absence of the pastor, served as teachers. For some years now the boys and girls have received their instruction in Garretson from the pastors of the parish, sometimes being confirmed in Norway Church, sometimes in Zion Church in Garretson.

On December 12, 1921, shortly after Rev. T. A. Mason arrived, Edward Fuglsby was elected superintendent of the Sunday School. At that time the Sunday School commenced the use of the Graded System, with classes taught only in the English language.

Mr. Fuglsby continued as superintendent, with the exception of 1927 when Miss Christie Berdahl served and 1928 and 1930 when Miss Christie Hermanson was its head, until Henry Berdahl was elected and served the years 1933-1935. Dale Simons was elected for



AN EARLY SUNDAY SCHOOL, PROBABLY ABOUT 1890

Front row, left to right: Hilda Njos (Kittelson), Alfred Vadheim, Ingebrit Hermanson, Carolyn Hermanson, (Anders), Lyder Larson.

Second row: Johannah Loftness (Simons)*, Tina Hermanson (Stalheim)*, Christina Wangsness (Craig), Louise Hermanson*, Anna Ellefson (Hermanson), Bertha Larson*, Anna Anderson (Loftness), Selma Njos (Olson)*, Minne Grinde (Hogan), Hannah Fuglsby (Nerheim)*, Josie Peterson (Simonson), Iver Henjum.

Third row: Magnus Munson, Willie Stalheim, Henry Stalheim, Louise Henjum*, Unnie Henjum*, Martha Njos (Johnson), Martha Henjum (Quamen), Julia Grinde (Frye), Ingrid Ellefson (Oldervik), Unnie K. Henjum*, Christina Ellefson*, Martha Stalheim*, Christina Hermanson (Medin), Johanna Hermanson*, Henry Fuglsby, Edward Fuglsby, Ole Fuglsby.

Fourth row: Albert Vadheim, Severi Vadheim*, Lewis Larson*, Carl Hermanson, Herman Wangsness*, Christian O. Berdahl, Carl Loftness, Lasse Vadheim (Superintendent).

* Deceased.

the following year, but was unable to finish his term so Miss Esther Hove was selected to complete the year and for the next year.

In 1938, Edward Fuglsby again was selected as superintendent. In 1939, Julian Berdahl was elected, but was unable to serve. His wife took his place and was elected and served the years 1941-1942. In 1943, the congregation did not elect a superintendent, but the deacons secured Mrs. Bennie Hammer to act. She was elected for the following year, and Melvin Hatlestad for the year 1945. Again in 1946, the congregation was unable to elect a leader so the trustees secured Mrs. Martin Berge who has been elected each succeeding year up to the present time.

Some of the highlights in the history of the Sunday School are: (1) The larg-

est enrollment, 65, in 1937, the smallest, 20, in 1945, the present, 53. (2) Charities benefited because of money given "In Memoriam". (a) Arlie Doxater, an Indian boy at the Wittenberg Mission was adopted in 1941 and is still being supported by two boxes of clothing and other incidentals each year (Mrs. Julian Berdahl was responsible for the beginning of this project and is still taking care of it). (b) "Childrens' Chapel", Sunday School by air and mail has received the entire Christmas offering for the past three years. (3) Choirs have been sponsored at different times by the Sunday School but the most noteworthy was the one directed by Henry Berdahl which gave a number of full evening concerts. (4) Birthday Pennies have been collected for many years for different purposes, but at present they

are maintaining the library. (5) For the fourth consecutive time, a congregational service and dinner was sponsored by the Sunday School. (6) The usual Christmas program always has been given.

Now, as in the '90's, the pattern for teaching "God's Word" to the children is the same. In the present Sunday School, there is a worship service consisting of hymns, an illustrated Bible talk by the superintendent, Mrs. Martin Berge, collections, etc., held in the church proper; then most of the classes go to the basement rooms for their lessons. These are supervised by the following teachers: Mrs. Hobart Haagen-

son, Mrs. Robert Danielson, Mrs. Eddie Larson, Mrs. Julian Berdahl, Mr. Dennis Hove, Mrs. Gilbert Kringen, Mrs. Richard Solheim, Mrs. Lloyd Hove and Mrs. Ernest Ormseth.

The writer would like to pay special tribute to the children who have attended Sunday School at Norway; may they always remember the Christian truths learned there! And to the faithful teachers, although no record has been kept, yet their names and their teachings are remembered by many.

May God bless the work of this Sunday School in the future as He has in the past!

Mrs. Martin Berge



THE PRESENT SUNDAY SCHOOL

First row, left to right: Janet Hove, Judy Songstad, Audrey Hove, Gary Hermanson, Eleanor Berdahl, Ronald Bly, Dianne Marth, Marilyn Nelson, Linda Berge, Ordel Ormseth, Dianne Solheim, Billy Haagenon, Karen Kringen, Mary Bly, Cheryl Hoepner, Marie Kringen, Judy Hoepner, Arlys Sitting, Fernice Kringen.

Second row, left to right: DeLyle Larson, Raymond Larson, Grant Kringen, Myron Nelson, Raymond Migler, Darlene Nelson, Carol Jean Hermanson, Shirley Nelson, Con Roy Langloss, Arden Nelson, David Bly, Harlan Sittig, Lye Songstad, Sandra Solheim, Edith Migler, Sharon Buskurud, Terry Buskurud.

Third row, left to right: Lucile Berge, LaVonne Swenson, Esther Ormseth, Eleanor Kringen, Carol Haagenon, Annette Danielson, Marleen Swenson, Ruby Larson, Jean Swenson, Rosella Larson, Lois Jean Hove.

Fourth row, left to right: William Berdahl, Harlan Meier, Lyle Berge, Mrs. Lloyd Hove (Teacher), Mrs. Julian Berdahl (Teacher), Dennis Hove (Teacher), Mrs. Robert Danielson (Teacher), Mrs. Ernest Ormseth (Teacher), Mrs. Martin Berge (Superintendent), Mrs. Hobart Haagenon (Teacher), Mrs. Gilbert Kringen (Teacher), Mrs. Eddie Larson (Teacher), Mrs. Richard Solheim (Teacher), Lorna Swenson, Beverly Danielson, Dale Sittig, Charles Berdahl. Not in picture, Rolly Quammen, Jr.

LUTHER LEAGUE

The Young People Luther League of Norway Lutheran Congregation was organized at the Ole J. Berdahl home on April 27, 1902. For many years it was known as the Edison Luther League, being named for the township in which the church is located; and meetings were held in the school house of school district No. 13.

The following is a brief account from the minutes of the organization meeting:

The meeting was called to order by O. O. Arten. Mr. Arten was chosen chairman for the evening and Clara Berdahl secretary. A constitution was adopted and the organization made permanent. O. O. Arten was elected president; Louis Bothun, vice president; Clara Berdahl, secretary; and Christine Hermanson, treasurer.

At this meeting, the following persons joined and became active members:

O. O. Arten	Anna Anderson
Louis Bothun	Mrs. Peder Hatlestad
Clara Berdahl	Mrs. Hans Loftness
Laura Bothun	Peder Hatlestad
Bertha Henjum	Mary Bothun
Millie Bothun	Mary Berdahl
Annie Loftness	Anna Ellefson
Tena Hermanson	John E. Berdahl
Abraham Bothun	A. C. Anderson
Ole Berdahl	Martha Berdahl
H. J. Berdahl	Christie Berdahl
Hans Loftness	Carrie Berdahl
Annie Berdahl	Emma Berdahl
Carl Hermanson	Tilda Berdahl
E. J. Berdahl	Christine Berdahl
Chris J. Berdahl	Andrew Berdahl
Hannah Berdahl	James O. Berdahl
Carl Loftness	Jennie Berdahl
Lars Otterness	Ida Berdahl
Unnie Henjum	Louise Henjum
I. J. Henjum	Christian Wangness
Clarence Berdahl	Julian Berdahl
Ida Hatlestad	Elizabeth Berdahl

On motion it then was decided to meet at the school house on Sunday, May 4th, at one o'clock.

* * *

For many years talent from the membership was used almost exclusively

in the programs. The principal feature of each program was a Bible study conducted by a different member at each meeting. The meetings were held in the afternoons because of lighting and transportation difficulties.

At its second meeting this league decided to join the South Dakota State Luther League. The annual convention of that organization was held at Garretson that year, and O. O. Arten and Clara Berdahl were chosen as delegates. At the present time, the League is, and for many years has been, a member of the International Young People's Luther League.

During the past, the League has had a part in many interesting projects.

On July 4, 1903, it sponsored a celebration at the O. J. Berdahl farm and donated the proceeds to Augustana College at Canton to be used in the furnishing of its then new chapel.

July 13, 1913, the new Lutheran Hymnary was used for the first time at Norway Church at a meeting of the League.

In 1920, the League purchased a piano from the Williams Piano Company of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, for use in the church. During the year several socials were held to help raise money to pay for this instrument.

Since becoming a member of the International Young People's Luther League, faithful support has been given to it. The last few years it has been recognized as one of the honor leagues of the Evangelical Lutheran Church giving twenty-five dollars or more a year to the International Y. P. L. projects.

At the meeting held on August 27, 1944, it was voted that the League purchase a service flag for the church; and, on October 22, 1944, a special dedication service was held. There are 17 blue stars on this flag which represent the following young men who

were in the service of our country during World War II:

Walter Hermanson, Naval Aviator
Stanley Larson
Lloyd Nesheim, Army Medical Base
Perry Nesheim, Army Infantry
Lawrence Stalheim, Navy Signal Corps
Ingram Hermanson, Army Base Ordnance Officer
Norman Fuglsby, Air Force
Milford Nesheim, Air Force
Sylvan Nesheim, Army
Lars Nesheim, Army
Clifford Henjum, Marines
Carl Arthur Henjum, Army
Stanley Evans, Navy

Charles L. Pugh, Air Force
Philip Hatlestad, Army
Lyle Nesheim, Army
Melvin Hatlestad, Jr., Army

And so our Luther League continues in the great youth program of our Church, helping "to win and to hold young people for Christ."

The present officers are: President, Wayne Hove; vice president, Marilyn Larson; secretary, Arla Meier; treasurer, Beverly Danielson.

Arla Meier, Secretary



Interior of Church prior to remodeling

CHURCH of my CHILDHOOD

(It seemed fitting that there should be an article telling of personal impressions of community and church life by someone reared in the congregation; but it was felt that this should come from the pen of someone not now a member of the congregation. For this reason, Mrs. Odean Monson (Christie Hermanson) was asked to prepare such an account. Any one of the many who have been reared in the congregation could and would have been glad to have prepared such account had he or she been asked. The limitations of this booklet did not permit of more than one such article.

Life in the community was quite uniform, although individual backgrounds and experiences varied. It is to be hoped that others who are in the community or have been reared in it will prepare accounts of family experiences to be shared when proper occasions arise. All too soon those who can do so will be gone; and the rich treasure of pioneer experiences will be lost forever.)

The afternoon sun was shining as I entered the gateway to Norway Cemetery. When I was ready to leave the wind had gone down. Twilight was approaching. I had brought pencil and paper to copy some dates from tombstones for my records. The actual copying hadn't taken long; but, as I walked from one family lot to another, my thoughts traveled far in time and distance.

Nearly all the names on the grave-stones were familiar. Some families no longer were represented in the community. All had been neighbors—many related. The church bore the name of the motherland across the sea.

It had taken some time to find a location in which to build homes. The caravan of covered wagons had brought them, these pioneers, to the unsettled Dakota prairie. Altho lacking much of life's simple necessities, they realized their need was not for bread alone and soon organized a society for the benefit of missions. A little later, they started the church which bore the name of the homeland, Norway.

Here in the cemetery, just beyond the shadow of the church which they built, lay charter members. This was

their church for which they had sacrificed. It always had given them much in return. Here they had gathered for morning worship, the men sitting on one side, the women and children on the other. At its baptismal font their children and children's children had been made heirs of eternal life through the sacrament of Holy Baptism. Later they had reaffirmed those vows at confirmation. Husband and wife had started new homes after receiving the blessings of God and the church at the altar. With their families, they had sat in the pews listening to God's Word,—the Law and the Gospel,—preached in its truth and purity. The life of the community had centered about the activities of the church.—Ladies' Aid, Luther League, choir practice, Sunday school with its annual picnic, circuit conventions—these provided the social gatherings for all ages, as well as fostering spiritual growth.

Sunday dinners and gatherings in the home were held in honor of baptisms and confirmations, stressing these important events in the lives of the honored guests. The conversations included the happenings in their own and neighboring parishes or the church at large, as well as talk about crops, political events, and persons. The company dinner where people of three generations gathered to share food and fellowship and ways traditional to them was of great importance in the lives of the people. So was the influence of pastors, Sunday school teachers, Bible school teachers, visiting speakers, who often were included with the family group at these gatherings.

Books and magazines from the church publishing house were found in the homes. Each Christmas meant new ones given by parents, grandparents or sponsors. Sacrifices were made that the young people might attend the church colleges. At one time there were more young people from Norway com-

munity attending Augustana Academy at Canton, than from any other community. Many of the young people left to find their homes and lives' work elsewhere; but Norway congregation had had the early years of their lives when the foundations were laid.

My first memories go back to the Christmas program on the afternoon of Christmas Eve. I can shut my eyes and almost smell the wonderful fragrance of candle-lighted tree, apples and candy in the darkened church as we opened the door. The sleigh ride from home had seemed long even if we kept repeating our pieces so we wouldn't forget. For several weeks we had taken our lunches along and stayed to practice after church. The programs always went better than the last practice. Oh, some forgot and had to be prompted, some swallowed their words in fear, some notes were off key, and even some tears were shed by the timid little ones; but it always was a lovely program. One's first appearance was a big event. The choir was bigger than usual. The boys and girls home from college brought their friends who took part. Some of these friends later became a part of Norway. Men with damp swabs on the end of long sticks stood close to the tree ready to put out any candle that might cause trouble. It was hard not to open the presents the choir members passed around. We did eat our apples and some from our sacks of nuts and candy.

Choir practice in the homes was a community social event. I was disappointed the time I fell asleep and had to go home without hearing any singing. I felt badly the time I accidentally bit a piece from one of Aunt Carolyn's best tumbler.

Cousin Oliver and I liked to sit between Grandma Stalheim and Grandma Ellefson in church. When our new shoes, alike except for shoelaces, kicked against the pew ahead one of the grandmas put them down where they belonged. That was usually the time we were handed a peppermint and told to hush and listen to Bergsaker. Years later when a Ladies' Aid

presented me with a purse that looked very much like grandmother's, I almost expected it to smell of peppermints when I opened it. When the boys got bigger, they sat with their fathers on the right side.

The first piece I remember speaking at Luther League was the hymn, "O God, our help in ages past." What better foundation in Christian nurture, public speaking, Lutheran doctrine, Christian service! One of my last memories of Luther League was of sitting on the church steps with six angel-food cakes and several bouquets of flowers while brother Walter went to town for the ice cream. While he was gone a heavy rain shower came up. League was called off, and we plowed home through mud with the cakes and flowers. We wished for the day when there should be better roads to Norway so League would not have to be postponed because of rain.

When Lades' Aid was held in the homes, it meant arranging for more seating. Planks on nail kegs or saw horses solved the problem. If the weather was nice the children and the men could be outside. Some times I was permitted to go home from Ladies' Aid with Grandma Ellefson and to stay a few days. We went in the buggy pulled by Bird. He burned to death in the barn fire at our place when grandmother came to see the new baby. The buggy didn't go very fast, but grandmother had gone to Ladies' Aid in slower ways. The early meetings were attended by those who walked to Aid, some by oxen hitched to the wagon. Grandmother Hermanson and her neighbor, Mrs. Loftness, walked to grandmother Ellefson's taking turns carrying the baby and dragging the quilt frames. Grandmother Ellefson thought she was fortunate when grandfather bought a hay rake. She used that to go to Aid as well as to haul eggs and butter to town, or to go to grandmother Berdahl's for plums. It meant the children who sat on a board on the back part of the tongue couldn't do much wriggling. She felt very well off when she got a two-wheeled cart. Grand-

mother had been a true pioneer. The caravan started for Dakota on her eighteenth birthday. Within one year she been wife, mother, widow, and childless. When she later married grandfather, it was the first marriage performed in Edison township, (1876). Her first home was a sod house. Beside working inside and outside for her family, she often had to leave to care for others. She was midwife, doctor, nurse, godmother for many, sometimes baptizing the babies before their brief life span ended. She knew what it was to burn barley for coffee, to twist hay for fuel. Her life's span included the ox-drawn covered wagon and the automobile. Hard times, grasshopper plagues helped to wear out her heart before she became very old. Her life was long enough to find time to serve her church and community in Ladies' Aid. The mission society was organized in her home in the fall of 1874. After a lull due to the grasshopper plague and hard times in general, when the East Aid was begun, she was the first president. She also was the first president of the United Aid when the East and West Aids joined. We had many good times at grandmother's; and I missed her greatly when she died.

As children, before we started public school, we attended a term of vacation Bible school or, as we called it, "Norwegian School," and continued every summer until confirmation. "En kat og en mus" was the first reading lesson after the A B C's. We memorized catechism, Bible history, and read the New Testament in Norwegian. Sometimes we stayed over night with friends. There was no playing "hide and seek" or "pom pom pull away" after supper until the lessons for the next day were recited; and the excuse, "I know it, but I can't say it," never was accepted. When memorizing, it often helped to walk to our mailbox and back saying it over and over again aloud. I remember the hymn, "Kirken, den er et gammelt hus." It was a hard one, requiring several trips to the mailbox. Flies and mosquitoes buzzed about my head as I walked. The boys were

playing with two wheels from an old cart pushing them into Mud Creek near the old well where an uncle drowned many years ago. Aunt Kia had told us about his removing the lid when he saw the folks coming from the field. His hat dropped in and in reaching for it, he had fallen in and drowned. She also had shown us the knoll where the covered wagon stopped when the family first came,—describing for us the black, burned-over prairie as they first saw it. It was near here, too, that the old Indian trail from Pipestone to Sioux Falls passed. The large Indian hammer head that held down the cover on the stone jar in our basement had been found there. As we played, the mental pictures which we children had of the procession of Indians that passed no doubt were more colorful than those processions had been in reality.

Our family's beginning in this country had been simple, humble, fraught with hardships and privations, though now that has been partly forgotten; and the past seems romantic. The very symbols of that humble beginning—the spinning wheel, the immigrant chest, the old cow bell, the Indian hammer, the carved wooden spoon, the fish-net loom later used for weaving fly nets that we associated with Grandpa Hermanson—were family heirlooms.

This Grandfather Hermanson, whom we never had seen, had not found a life of ease when he came to America; but it had offered greater opportunities than had Norway. Born in Sogn, he had spent some years fishing in Lofoten before coming to America in 1869. Left alone in the new prairie home with a family of children, when his wife died at childbirth, his life was spent working hard on the homestead, plowing furrows, planting trees, replacing the sod house with a frame structure. Un-schooled in the finer arts, he must have been taught, or had learned by himself, the art of carving on wood. The parts of his fish-net loom which I have are beautiful in design and craftsmanship.

Now they are gone, these ancestors of ours. Five generations rest here be-

neath the sod. Soon Norway will observe its 75th anniversary. We honor these pioneers who started it; and it is fitting that we do. But we do not engage in ancestor worship. Not all was as it should have been in the old days. Some were rough in speech, careless in habits. We are "flesh of their flesh, bone of their bone," with similar weaknesses of flesh. Like them, we have need of the church. As we grow in Christian life, we are more and more impressed by the greatness and limit-

lessness of God's Grace. The world was different seventy-five years ago, with other trials and hardships; but the need for the Grace of God is as great as ever. Truly, "Lord, Thou has been our dwelling place in all generations." Psalm 90:1.

And now, Norway Church, "I commend you to God and to the word of his grace which is able to give you the inheritance among all those who are consecrated." Acts. 20:32.



Mr. James O. Berdahl

The above picture of James O. Berdahl appears at the express wish of the 75th Anniversary Booklet Committee. When the committee met to outline plans for this booklet, it felt that it could do no better than to invite this son of our Church and son of Norway congregation to assist in its preparation. He has taken hold of the task with great interest and energy. We wish to acknowledge his hand not only in the preparation of the congregation's history, but in the general organization of the booklet. On behalf of Norway Evangelical Lutheran Congregation, we express our gratitude to him for his labors.

The 75th Anniversary Booklet Committee

Rev. E. W. Rossing, Pastor
Mr. Eric Hermanson, Chairman
Mr. Edward Fuglsby
Mr. Edward Hermanson
Mr. Iver Henjum

All I need to say, in response to the committee's words of appreciation is, "Thank you!"

As a son of Norway Congregation, it has been a pleasure and an honor to have had a part in the planning and preparation of this booklet. To those who acquire a copy, we trust it will prove to be a cherished souvenir.

James O. Berdahl,
Sioux Falls, S. D.

Hymn-"Children Of God,"Dedicated to D.R.Luth.Church by Rev.B.J.Rothnem.

Children of our glorious God, Sons and daughters of the King, Prize your highborn heritage, Gift beyond all meriting: Let your heart in God rejoice; Praise Him with exultant voice.	3.Live to glorify the Lord Who redeemed you for His own. Help to spread His saving grace Where His name is still unknown. Work, that many more may be Of God's royal family.
2.Let your manner and your deeds Show this great nobility. Let your sense of sonship be A sublime reality; Mindful every dawn and day That you are God's own for aye.	4.Build His church, and make it strong; Let its banners be unfurled: Until God shall reign supreme, King of kings, thruout the world, Until all the ransomed throng Join in heav'n' triumphant song!

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